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The London Charivari

WHILE the Peppiatt Committee considers the desirability of a levy on betting to improve the breeding of racehorses, someone might consider making a levy somewhere to improve the breeding of humans. The National Playing Fields Association is worrying again about the shortage of funds, a situation that ought never to arise but only too often does. I would like to suggest, by way of a start, that a whacking great percentage might be hijacked from the fees received by rich Soccer clubs for transferred footballers. Come to that, why not a bit of the gates?

He Can't Mean This

MONTY'S reputation for saying the startling and unexpected thing jumped up several more notches



with his remark about Alanbrooke's being the best soldier in the war.

The Leastest With The Mostest

THE "soft-selling" advertising technique, by which goods are sold without fabulous claims being made for them, is sweeping America at the moment. This has prevented firms involved in the baby-car craze from talking about "the biggest small car in the country"; but it hasn't stopped a somewhat mixed-up tycoon boasting of

his large chain of "midget super-markets."

Welcomed With Open Arms

IN ten years' time, says an American satellite engineer, "it will be possible to send guided missiles to any part of



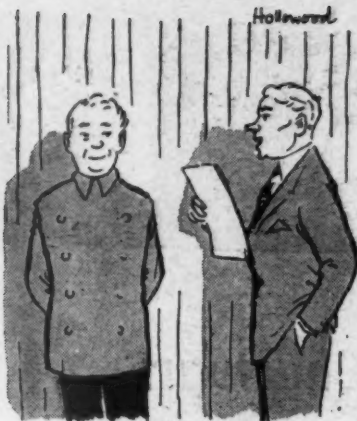
the world on errands of mercy." Well, after another ten years of news items like this we may all feel more liberally towards euthanasia.

Thin Houses at the Follies

MR. BEVAN complained last week that "parliamentary reporting has become a sheer travesty"; and he can say that again. The public gets no idea at all of what a debate is really like. How many readers, conning the mellifluous phrases noted down by the reporters from the lips of some hon. Member, realize that the speech was not made to an avid audience of six hundred and twenty-nine, or even three hundred and fifteen; but to five Tories (one asleep) who are only there because they hope to be called next and eight Socialists who genuinely cannot spare the money for a pot of tea outside?

Bright is the Ring of Words

AT least Mr. Heathcoat Amory had a good house for his speech last



"And now, for 64,000 roubles, who won the War—Zhukov, Stalin, Voroshilov, Timoshenko or Sir Arthur Bryant?"

week. How stirred the new hands must have been to hear him as he called for "a sound balance of payments, a reasonably stable price-level and a high rate of savings. With these" (the Chancellor went on) "it is possible to plan with confidence for full employment, a high rate of national investment and expanding production." Tyro backbenchers knew this at once for the real stuff of debate, not to say a subtle blow at Mr. Bevan's plea for televised proceedings.

Third Carbon

SECRET documents were destroyed when fire broke out at the Ministry of Defence last week, but according to an official statement duplicates were available for most of them. As for the rest, I have no doubt that in his present expansive mood Mr. Khrushchev would gladly supply copies.

Skating on Thin Ice

VILLON'S plaintive inquiry "Where are the snows of yesteryear?" finds an echo in Switzerland (echoes are always rife in Alps) among the sportive holiday furnishers, for in the last sixty inglorious years one seventh of the total area of glaciers in that country has just melted away—68,000 acres vanished in the twinkling of a half century. The Findelen alone "retreated," as the Swiss glaciers commission puts it, 1,438 feet, which would have seriously thrown out Mark Twain's calculations as to whether it was

quicker to go by train or moving glacier. Say not, however, the struggle naught availeth; the Martinets, Prapio and Paneyrosse each gained three painful feet. If the cold war thawed as quickly as the Swiss snows there would be peace in our time.

Amazing New Filter

THE filter-tip situation is getting complicated. I have just seen an advertisement for an American non-filter cigarette which claims that smoke which passes through fine tobacco tastes best, the inference being that the tobacco itself acts as a filter. The smoke, the ad explains, travels "over, under, around and through" the tobacco, and I must say this seems an admirable arrangement enough. The copy-writer isn't finished there, though. He saves his most devastating piece of ingenuity for the end, and not in very big type either. "You can light either end!" he says. What about *that*, filter men?

Human and Friendly

I HAVE been waiting for other Government officials to follow the example of the Public Trustee, who has been taking a good deal of space in the newspapers to advertise his "human, friendly and understanding" services. Why not some similar overtures from the Government Chemist, the Master in Lunacy, and the Government Actuary? The Master of the Rolls is supposed to stimulate the publication of old



"G.P.O.? How far down on the list are we for a 'phone at home?"

The third in the series of drawings in colour by Hewison, "As They Might have Been," appears on page 447. The subject is:

MARILYN MONROE

manuscripts: when did he last urge us to look for Boswelliana in our attics? There is also the Queen's Proctor, who has walked far too long in the shadows. The Sunday newspapers would gladly carry his appeal for information about citizens who begin larking about before the decree absolute is through.

A Port in Every Port

THE *Oriana* has been launched by breaking three bottles of wine on her hull, one for each of the three countries she will visit. A dangerous precedent, I feel. Some small cargo ships would need dozens of bottles. Parsimonious shipowners will buy port-type beverages in quantity, or even tonic water. And what happens to the paintwork as the great mass of bottles crashes against the bows? Besides, the more wine used for launching the greater the temptation to save on lunch.

The Things They Learn

AT this season our fellow citizens are thronging the municipal institutes to study the darnedest things: scooter maintenance (very popular this year), boot repairing, song interpretation, home entertaining and the Meaning and Structure of Tragedy. In the strictly practical field, I am astonished to see how long it takes to master saw maintenance; even more astonished to learn that one can spend two years on box and carton making. Cutting and creasing are not all; there are factors like rub-proofness and soap fastness too.

For confused Londoners, the City Literary Institute runs a course in clear thinking. The curriculum deals with prejudice and personal bias and "obstacles to lucid thought like advertisement and propaganda." The admen must not take umbrage; there are plenty of courses in advertising.

Last Thought

THESE revelations about American TV quizzes should boost Mr. Randolph Churchill's morale like anything. When he appeared on one a few years ago he was honourably eliminated almost at once.

—MR. PUNCH



AN APPLE FOR THE CUSTOMER?

"... the gains should not be taken only in higher wages and bigger profits, but should also be shared far more widely in the form of lower prices."
—Mr. Heintz Amory

THE ROAD TO 1984

A series of probes for proles.

This week's subject is . . .



Germany's Two Futures BY JOHN MIDGLEY

EXCEPT that Dr. Adenauer will still be Chancellor, little is certain about the condition of Germany in twenty-five years. However, it is not difficult to imagine how some passages of the article *Deutschland* in the *Staats Lexikon*, 1984 edition, might read:

Government. The federal capital was moved from Bonn in 1975, when the growing congestion of the old provisional capital as a commercial metropolis had made it costly and inconvenient as a centre of government. Parliamentary complaints came to a head after a period of eighteen months in which the Chancellor had had no more than telephonic communication with his Cabinet, Dr. Adenauer declaring that he was too old to sit in traffic jams on the road to Bonn, while the ministers declared that their mileage allowance was inadequate to cover journeys to Rhöndorf. The political crisis of 1974 reached its height when Dr. Adenauer proposed that if Parliament wanted a Chancellor on the spot it should elect a new one. However, he said this while the Bundestag and Cabinet were celebrating NATO week with a trip up the Rhine in a newly-commissioned German flotilla of nuclear submarines, and by the time they surfaced he had changed his mind, announcing that the international situation made it wiser to move the seat of government to his own front door. This was the origin of the new political centre, the Bad Honnef-Rhöndorf com-

plex, which has served as a model for centres of government in other countries.

Population. Some 60 per cent of the population of Europe (if eastern, central, northern and southern Europe are excluded from that definition, as is now the accepted practice) lives in the Rhine basin, a virtually unbroken urban and suburban belt between five and forty-three miles wide, stretching from Wesel to Basle. This region has been called the California of Europe, a comparison made more apt by the persistence of smog. Its unprecedented population growth has been due only partly to natural increase and the lengthening of the human life span. The principle of free movement of labour within the Western Common Market has played a large part, permitting many millions of southern Italians, Spaniards and Anatolians to settle in the Rhine basin, attracted by the opportunities of well-paid work. To these must be added the migrations from East Germany, a flow tolerated the more readily by the East German authorities since the adoption of similar rules in the Eastern Common Market made it a simple matter to replace the East German emigrants with colonists from the Balkans and, more recently, from Asia. Thus it is claimed (Communist Demographic Handbook, 1983) that Magdeburg is the biggest Bulgarian city, and East Berlin and Rostock the fifth and sixth Chinese cities in the world.

Trade and Communications. Since the deepening of the Rhine to take ocean-

going ships as far as Strasbourg the foreign trade of West Germany is almost exclusively conducted through the Rhine ports, notably Duisburg, Cologne, Bonn, Mainz, Mannheim and Karlsruhe. This vast engineering task required the demolition between 1972 and 1978 of all existing Rhine bridges. The decision to undertake it was facilitated by the slump of 1972; thus the West German chemical industry was saved from the threat of ruin by, among other government measures, the huge orders placed for the new plastic high-level bridges. It was then that the Rhine took on its now familiar orderly, pulsing aspect, continuously embanked for 800 kilometres, controlled by concrete barrages and locks, and floodlit at night.

The change was opposed by the tourist interests, the river fishermen and the Rhenish wine-growers, who not only faced the loss of the lower slopes of their vineyards but also feared that the inevitable change in the climate of the Rhine basin would damage the character of their product. Their objections were robbed of much of their force by the advances in wine-making technique recorded by chemical science between 1970 and 1975. Dr. Koch declared on behalf of the synthetic chemical industry federation that his members were fully capable of making good any loss of character which the wines might suffer through a rise in the general humidity of the region. What was more, he added, they were able to reproduce any desired vintage without

assistance from nature at all, and to market it—in the convenient and economical form of soluble sachets—in types and quantities dictated by public taste and not by natural hazards. "Viticulture," said the doctor, "is a survival from the days of the post coach." There were protests at this from scholars who recalled that viticulture in Germany was in fact a survival from the Roman Empire. But the decline of the old, "natural" method of wine-making continued. A subsidiary of I.G. Farben was soon able to buy up the goodwill of several of the great wine-growing estates and to register their names, together with the now legendary vintage year 1959, as trade marks for its products.

European Relations. The concentration of shipping, trade and industry in the Rhine basin had political effects which might, perhaps, have been foreseen. Thus, the atrophy of the economic links between the Hanseatic ports of the north German coastline and western Europe led in 1979 to the secession of Hamburg and Bremen from the federation. Painful though it was from some points of view, this development

was accepted at the time as a convenient way of tilting the balance of party strengths at Bad Honnef in favour of the governing party, which just then needed a two-thirds majority in both Houses for a change in the Basic Law to permit the Federal Chancellor to combine his German office with the Presidency of the French Republic. Hamburg and Bremen were opposition strongholds; their departure was regretted but not actively opposed. Their socialist mayors were last definitely heard of in 1980 in Dresden, where they had gone to negotiate the association of their city-states with the Eastern Common Market. They were later reported to have gone for a rest cure to one of the Khrushchev Memorial Sanatoria on Formosa, and there was adverse comment in the Western press when they failed to return to Europe.

Dr. Adenauer was widely reproached at the time by opponents of the Right and Left with pursuing a "Little Germany" policy; however, these complaints lost much of their force when, not long after, he was formally installed as President of the French Republic by the aged Constable, Marshal Soustelle,

in a simple but moving ceremony in the Forum at Algiers.

Relations between the West and East German States were strained by these developments, and a number of painful incidents occurred. The Dresden government raised the transit tolls on West German traffic and, when payment was refused, cut the Urals-Rhine oil pipeline for three months. Acting apparently on their own initiative, a group of East German air pilots took advantage of the identity of name, insignia and colours between the two Lufthansa airlines to fly off with six rocket airliners claimed to belong to West Germany; these aircraft were then put into regular service on East German account, and while the resultant dispute is still before the International Court, the aircraft are said to be nearing the end of their economic life. At the Olympic Games at Marrakesh the East German team (having strong Chinese and Bulgarian contingents, including Müller Chu-teh, the world hurdles champion from Rostock, and Schulze-Gheorgiev, the great long-distance runner, of Magdeburg) marched off the field in protest against the playing of the



"Then guess what . . . he topped it into a bunker!"



new West German national hymn, *Europäisch ist Berlin*. At the end of 1980 diplomatic relations between Bad Honnef and Dresden were broken off for the third time, and the sixteenth annual session of the bipartite Council for German Unity broke up in uproar.

Naturally it may all go quite differently. Germany, as is obvious, has two futures (or, like the rest of us, possibly none; but that is a possibility we may as well disregard). There they both are, Germany's two futures, two spools of film waiting for the projectionist. We have just taken samples from one of them; but in the end it may be the other one that is run off. How a divided country will shape up to its future is anybody's guess.

Germany in the last fifteen years has provided the classic example of how to make something out of nothing. Remember Germany in 1945; you could be forgiven for having supposed that the Germans would take many years longer than they have to become rich again—or even for having doubted whether they would ever get back on their feet at all.

Because they did not put up with

ruin, but turned the scrap-iron back into works, factories, railways and roads in double-quick time, the Germans are often supposed to be a sort of black-legs who make life disagreeable for ordinary folk by indulging a repulsive addiction to work. I don't myself think that the Germans are by character more diligent or (what would be worse) more ingenious than, say, the English. What makes them different just now is that, unlike the English, they have looked ruin in the face and smelt its breath. That experience accounts for many of their virtues and some of their more objectionable characteristics as well.

An obsessive fear of poverty has kept them on the move from 1945 to 1959, when they are getting rich and fat again: and in order to get rich and fat they have put aside not only the clap-trap of *Grossdeutschland* and conquest that landed them in the mess they were in but a lot of the ordinary habits of national solidarity that are legitimately called patriotism. There is no such thing as a Federal Republican patriotism or a Democratic Republican patriotism; either these people have to think of themselves as Germans or they have to put the idea of nationality out of mind.

It is possible that they will manage to go on concentrating (East and West Germans alike) simply on getting richer. Alternatively they may at some point decide that the time has come when they can stop running to out-distance the wolves of poverty and turn their attention to uniting their country again. If they do this, goodness knows how they will go about it, or whether they will succeed in doing it without war, with war, or at all. But if they do not, what will their children be like?

Punch's British Musicals

Next Wednesday's PUNCH will contain the first of a series of home-made musical comedies based on the social scene in Britain to-day. The authors will include:

A.P.H.
ALEX ATKINSON
J. B. BOOTHROYD
EVOE
R. P. LISTER
ANGELA MILNE
PHILIP OAKES
GWYN THOMAS
T. S. WATT

The Man Who Knew Too Much

By H. F. ELLIS

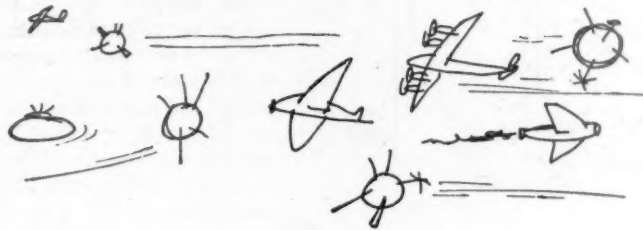
IN all these undeniably fascinating Quiz revelations from America it is not the leading figures that interest me so much as one of the background characters. Anyone who wishes may purse his lips over Mr. Charles Van Doren—preferably, perhaps, anyone who has had a hundred thousand dollars or so dangled in front of him, with all the smooth it's-quite-the-normal-thing technique of the professional corrupter, and successfully resisted the lure. Let stones by all means be thrown by men and women of renown who have, let us say, sternly declined to allow their names and faces to be used, for a consideration, in support of advertised products about which they neither know nor care a rap. Myself, I prefer to take a John Bradford attitude* about the sad, remorseful (but, at the time of writing, still moderately well-heeled) principals in the Congressional Committee's investigation. It is Mr. Herbert Stempel, the unexceptionable, the untarnished Mr. Stempel, who excites me most.

Mr. Stempel's only fault was that he knew too much. He was, as Mr. Freedman, the producer of the "Twenty-one" quiz, told Mr. Van Doren, an "unbeatable champion." That was the root of the whole trouble. Mr. Van Doren, on his own testimony, would have liked to take part in the quiz unaided, to challenge Mr. Stempel man to man to a contest of merit unalloyed. But Mr. Freedman wouldn't have it. It would never do. The dreaded Stempel was too knowledgeable, he could not be beat by such ingenuous means. And beat, by hook or by crook, champion Stempel had to be. Somehow or other he had to be dislodged from the programme. For the truth is that, like most men who know too much, Stempel was unpopular. Viewers were tired of him. He persisted, in the words of Mr. Freedman as relayed to the Committee by Mr. Van Doren, in "defeating opponents to the detriment of the programme." His omniscience had

become a bore. Stempel, so ran the fiat in the secret councils of "Twenty-one," must go.

One does not know, for details are sadly lacking, to what extent Mr. Freedman and others went to work on Mr. Stempel, in an attempt to get him to alleviate his own unpopularity, before they resorted to the desperate expedient of priming the opposition. But one may guess that they had a shot at it. Knowledgeability is not in itself offensive, it is *assured* knowledgeability that repels, the cool assumption of omniscience, the flat unhesitating "the facts

are as follows" way of dismissing a question. Is it possible that Mr. Stempel's manner was a trifle smug? "Can't you agonize a bit for Chrissake, Herbert?" one seems to hear Mr. Freedman crying as the angry telephone messages came pouring in. "Give it the head in the hands treatment once in a while, why don't you? I know you know Thomas A. Hendricks was Vice-President 1885-89. I know you know Cotopaxi rates 19,344 feet elevation, and the world's lowest surface temperature was at Verkhoyansk, Siberia, February 5 and 7, 1892, one



*If asked in a quiz who said "There but for the grace of God, etc." I should unhesitatingly have replied "John Bunyan" and got no more than a consolation Cadillac or washing-machine for my pains. For print, one checks one's references and finds that life is full of surprises.



hundred and twenty-two below freezing. I know you know any damn thing I care to ask you, and you know it. But where's the harm in making like it slipped your mind a couple of seconds; just so the viewers will start calling out 'Quick, Ellie! They got that loathsome Stempel snarled up at last'?"

Whether or no any such suggestions were ever made by Mr. Freedman to the unbeatable Mr. Stempel, one cannot doubt that Stempel would have none of them. He is a man, one instinctively feels, unwilling to truckle, dedicated to the art of omniscience. He continued to rap out the answers, implacable, unhesitating, his face set sternly against the increasingly frenzied appeals to ham it up a bit, to screw up his eyes, to register even momentary dismay. And week by week his unpopularity grew. Viewers switched off in thousands. They could no longer endure his unflurried recitation of the dates of the Shepherd Kings of Egypt or the maximum depths of the seven seas. So what was poor Mr. Freedman to do? Offer Stempel twice next week's prize-money on the side to make ten deliberate mistakes? Or stuff a new challenger up to the brim with answers so correct

that even the knowledgeable champion would have to concede? He could hardly hesitate. Mr. Stempel, if we have accurately estimated his character, was not the man to take a bribe. Not all the gold in Fort Knox would persuade him to vary by a single day the date of Byron's death or knock a single inch off the height of the Eiffel Tower. So the unlucky Van Doren was for it.

A new thought occurs to me, as I mull sympathetically over the tangled problems of TV quiz producers. Given a champion as unbeatable, as widely detested, but less incorruptible than Mr. Stempel, is there even then any straightforward way of bribing him to get the hell out of it? He may be, he certainly is, a liability to the broadcasting company that desires to be rid of him, but what an asset he represents to rival TV concerns! An undislodgable dagger plunged in the vitals of the enemy. An irremovable star performer guaranteed to encourage increasing multitudes of viewers to switch from Channel A to Channels B or C as the weary weeks go by. I do not see that there is any sum that Channel A could offer their champion quizman to take himself off in a blaze of error, which would not immediately be doubled by Channel B on condition that he clung to office by giving the right answers. Had Mr.

Stempel been less scrupulous, and Mr. Freedman less ingenious, it appears to me that a bribe war of astronomical magnitude might well have riven the TV world across the Atlantic. As it was, the Gordian knot was cut with an absence of fuss that does credit to all concerned. Mr. Stempel was left alone to do his damndest, and other means were found to defeat him, if not fairly and squarely, at least without attempting to do violence to his passion for imparting accurate information.

And what of the future? It looks as if, when the Congressional Committee has done its work, the priming of challengers will be out for good. So how will the Freedmen of to-morrow dislodge their tedious unbeatable champions? The only answer is never to let them in. The whole system of preliminary tests must be reorganized to ensure a steady stream of lovable, short-lived, ignorant, eyebrow-wrinkling, oh-I-say-it's-not-fair champions. If the United States is short of candidates, we are as ever keen to step up our exports. ☆

Silly Season

"Forecast for period ending at midnight: London Area, S.E. and Central S. England, East Anglia, East Midlands, and Channel Islands: Moderate W. to S.W. winds; mostly fine, funny periods."

The Guardian

New Light on Quaint Old Cornish Town

Mr. Justice Devlin at Bodmin Assizes accused the people of Helston, the Floral Dance town, of scandal mongering: a great many people, he said, had kept fairly strict surveillance on an innocent couple's movements.

AS I walked home with a Helston sprite
She said "Just keep your trap shut tight,
Truth's a stuff that will not endure,
Not much else but the air is pure
In this quaint old Cornish town."
Borne from a bar with the "Time, gents, please,"
Stirred with the leaves of the night caff's teas,
Tales that would raise an eye in France,
Called by the Sunday press "romance,"
On the grapevine came floating down.

I thought I could hear a prurient crone
In a scornful, scarifying undertone:
"Villain! Felon! Low class scum!
Poltroon! Brute! What opprobrium!"
All with a smug, complacent glance,
And all from a lofty Moral Stance.

— LESLIE MARSH

The Bubble Game

By E. S. TURNER

IF I understand him correctly, Mr. Ted Leather, M.P., thinks it scandalous that people with no known qualifications should be able to buy up "shells" of derelict companies and invite the public to invest in ill-defined or undisclosed projects. It is a point of view certainly; but some of us feel that Mr. Leather is striking a hard blow at an old English sport.

I have been looking through the proposals which were floated during the most invigorating period of Britain's commercial history, that is, in the six months or so before the South Sea Bubble burst. As nearly every schoolboy knows, the leading performer of that day was a promoter in Cornhill who invited subscriptions "for carrying on an undertaking of Great Advantage, but no one to know what it is." Having collected £2,000 in deposits in a morning he caught the Channel packet in the evening.

Yet here we are, in 1959, cheerfully entrusting our money to directors who promise no more than to use it for such purposes as may occur to them. We buy shares in a factory which makes striped humbugs and next day read that it has launched out into fish fingers.

A great many of the projects of 1720 had the most splendid and public-spirited aims. The only conceivable objection to them was that they were unattainable. What could be more praiseworthy than filling the country with hospitals for bastard children, "providing for, and employing, all the poor in Great Britain," ridding the nation of the French Disease, paying pensions and annuities to all, purchasing "Perpetual Advowsons, Rights of Patronage and Next Presentation," and improving woad?

Again, what more laudable than the proposal to improve the breed of English mules (a sullen, sub-standard race) by importing large jackasses from Spain? The clergyman behind this experiment in evolution got as far as bidding for some stud lands in the Woolwich marshes. He lived to be very bitter about wags who said there were enough jackasses in the country already.

Another admirable project was that of finding a less offensive way of emptying the necessary houses of Great

Britain. Inquisitive readers of the *Daily Post*, who wanted facts as well as an investment, were told that the methods were "not proper here to be mentioned."

More visionary, perhaps, were the proposals to form a coral fishery in the Mediterranean, to develop "a wheel for the perpetual motion," to make butter out of beech nuts, to turn quicksilver into "a solid and malleable Body, so that 'twill spread under the Hammer," to extract silver from lead, to bring fresh fish by sea to London (Sir Richard Steele's idea), and to develop a settlement called Acadia seventy miles

up a desolate and anonymous river in North America.

How many of us could have failed to subscribe towards Mr. Puckle's machine-gun, which (unless his proposals have been wilfully misinterpreted) was designed to revolutionize the art of war by firing round bullets at Christians and square ones at Turks? It has been suggested that Mr. Puckle might have gone the whole way and arranged to kill Christians with cruciform bullets and Turks with crescent-shaped ones. This is to misunderstand the purpose of the weapon, which was to make a nastier hole in a heathen than in a Christian.



"Genuine 30,000 miles, and none of 'em on the London-Birmingham Motorway."



The ideas of men like Mr. Puckle were too much for short-sighted wits, who began to "advertise" companies for such purposes as "melting down Carpenters' Chips and Sawdust etc. and then running them into Planks and Boards of all Lengths and Sizes... free from Sap and Knots." The public found these purely humorous proposals tiresome, and serious entrepreneurs, like the group who promised to provide all London with straw, were forced to insert announcements like "This is to give notice that the said co-partnership is real."

Investors did not mind humorous proposals so long as they were coupled with a request for money. There was, and is, a peculiar satisfaction, which I suspect Mr. Leather does not understand, in buying a parcel of shares in a company of laughable pretensions and unloading them at a profit on someone else. The second buyer knows that the shares are moonshine, but he is confident that he, too, can find a smirking purchaser. So it goes on, like one of those party games at which a ludicrous object is passed hastily round the circle until the music stops, when the person holding it is, rightly, the target of popular derision.

Equally out of touch with popular sentiment, in 1720, were a group of business men who, from an address in Exchange Alley, decided to teach the investing public a lesson. They invited subscriptions to an insurance company which, unlike others, was to be an *effectual* one. The receipts issued to the public gave authority "to be received a subscriber to a certain subscription to be made some time or other, they did not know when; to some certain scheme or other, they did not know what;

proposed by some people or other, they did not know who; for the insurance of ships etc., they did not know how."

Having raked in a generous sum these gentlemen offered next day to pay it all back, and then expected to be commended for their public spirit. Instead they were abused for wasting everybody's time. If a similar trick were played to-day I imagine the "stags" would be equally indignant.

It was unfortunate, as tedious realists have pointed out, that the aggregate capital of these bubble companies should have exceeded the total amount

of cash then circulating in Europe. In the advertisement columns of the *Post Boy* and the *Daily Courant* the promoters took less space to ask for millions of pounds than the empirics required in the adjoining columns to describe the virtues of their cures for leprosy and loss of memory. But once the game of asking for millions had begun there was no turning back. If two millions sterling was needed to set up salt pans in Holy Island, one could hardly ask for less than three millions to buy Irish bogs for drainage, or less than four millions to fight the illegal running of wool.

When the Government began to threaten these enterprises a pained note crept into the advertisements. The promoter would say "'Tis not to be supposed that the undertaking should fail to proceed"; but if the worst happened he would return the money. One firm which made this offer was proposing to carry coals from Newcastle to London. It is disappointing to find no evidence of a proposal to conduct this traffic in the reverse direction, but 'tis not to be supposed that the idea was overlooked. An innumerable total of promising schemes, it seems, "perished in ye Embrio."

Old Worlds to Conquer

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

AT last week's meeting of the Back to First Principles Society enthusiastic note was taken of Mr. E. Hartman's success at Cranfield, Beds., where his one-man aircraft with birdlike wings rose several yards off the ground for a distance of more than a hundred feet. In asking members to show their approval in the usual way, the Chairman said that they should not be too greatly dismayed by the fact that the wings did not actually flap. This would come later. Meanwhile, the achievement could be regarded as the greatest step backward since the recent attempt to cross the Atlantic by balloon. It had been hoped that Mr. Hartman would be present, but he had sent a note of apology explaining that he was working at high pressure on an even

more reactionary device with wings secured to the pilot by means of wax.

Progress reports in other fields were then called for.

Mr. H. W. Cowmayne, a member of the Faculty of Southampton University, reported good progress in the Department of Mathematics, where experiments were working back to a system of counting by notched sticks: this was a notable improvement on the system of coloured beads on wire reported at the Society's summer meeting, and if the advance continued it might well stem the tide of automatic accounting. ERNIE, in Mr. Cowmayne's view, would probably be the first to go, its place being taken by fool-proof rudimentary methods of random selection involving straws of varying lengths.

In the sphere of domestic utilities Lady Philippa Bile-Brewster applauded an experiment in basic water-supply methods. A "quite humble cottager," a Mr. Ezekiel Winch, finding water at the bottom of a garden rubbish-pit, had bricked in the sides of the pit and was now regularly carrying water into his cottage by pail. As he had also, after intensive research, succeeded in rolling cylinders of tallow round string which, when ignited, produced illumination adequate for the reading of large print, Lady Philippa expressed the hope that Mr. Winch might be offered honorary membership. The proposal was put to the vote and unanimously agreed to.

Sir Hubert Rumley, M.Ch., speaking for medicine, said that a further satisfactory reaction from so-called wonder drugs and miracle operations had been marked by recent work with leeches. At the same time more and more of his own patients were being persuaded to fight rheumatism with potatoes and iodine lockets, and the tarring of amputations was catching on apace. No one could say what the outcome of these gratifying trends might be, but there seemed no doubt that they would lead in time to drastic alterations in National Health Service practice and procedure. Permission was already being sought from the Ministry to prescribe large, cold keys for nose-bleeding, and the return to primitive panaceas for hiccups would, if all went well, mean that sudden shocks of graduated magnitude would be available at all good chemists. The purely private practitioner could always rely on the curative property of his bill. (Laughter.)

The only contribution in the field of the arts came from Dr. Gresham Crimp, lately resident conductor of the Blackburn Philharmonic Orchestra. Dr. Crimp sought, and received, permission to produce to the meeting a short reed-pipe, perforated at intervals, capable of playing only a five-note scale of coarse tone and doubtful intonation. Compared with the single-note instrument of early musical history he realized that this was still a somewhat elaborate and advanced device, but he saw no reason why further researches should not eventually get back to the one-note instrument, and colleagues of his were even making experiments with

a solid cylinder which would produce no note at all. It would be important, if this reached perfection, to ensure that it should not be employed in percussion; brought sharply into contact with hollow objects of varying volumes it might well swing the Society's musical activities into reverse and set them back as far as the early xylophone. In answer to a question, Dr. Crimp regretted that his work on drum vellums was at a standstill for the moment. He was at present unable to find a skin which would not produce a tone when stretched and struck.

Summing up, the Chairman said that the meeting must be well pleased with regress made so far. The Society was, after all, young. Referring once more to Mr. Hartman's aeronautical triumph at Cranfield, he particularly urged other science members to intensify their researches. In the field of armaments alone there were immense opportunities. Some of his hearers, he knew, were already at work on the invention of the cross-bow; let them get it right as soon as possible, and hasten on to the flint axe-head. Who could tell?—in time, some really inspired member might perfect the fist.

In the meantime, said the Chairman, he was pleased to close the proceedings with a note from Lord Rootes which had been handed in to the platform. This announced that an executive of the Group had discovered the wheel. All would welcome this news. It might be that, within the life-time of members present, men would be moving from point to point on foot.

☆

"The bridge is suspended between two pairs of nylons just over 400ft. high."

Torquay Herald-Express

Anything in WX?



FOR THE PRESENT

YOU'LL have noticed that Christmas comes round faster each year. Yet fifty-two issues of PUNCH still manage to squeeze through the narrowing gap. A comforting thought? A brake on a whirling world? Don't keep it to yourself. Make PUNCH the 1959 Christmas Present for your most deserving friend, to count off the weeks of 1960 at leisure. Send us the name and address and we will do the rest, including Greetings from you, timed for The Day. Subscriptions: Great Britain and Eire £2 16s.; Canada (by Canadian Magazine Post) £2 10s. (\$7.25); Elsewhere Overseas £3 (U.S.A. \$9.00)

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Spolita

Written in the belief that there must somewhere be a market for good, clean, homely fun

By BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

WHAT was I, Vladimov Nabitov, thinking of—messaging around with a chick like Spolita? For days this was the question that throbbed and thrummed at my temples. Was I mad? Was I some sort of monster? So far the story of my liaison with the delicious nymphet had been kept secret, even from Gordon John, but I knew that one false move, one careless word or *geste*, could put the cat among the pigeons and heap fires of contumely upon my head.

Let me admit it, I knew no remorse. What I had done I had done. And I was not ashamed. When we first met, Spolita my lovely, my beautiful nymphet, was trading only thirty-four years to my forty. She was six years my junior!

And I was completely captivated. Spolita was indeed a bewitching creature, as sophisticated as they come, with a seductively emaciated body and a mind as alert as all the Juke Box jurists rolled into one. I was her slave.

I had rationalized my sin out of existence. Oh, yes, I was six years her senior, old enough indeed to be her elder brother; but girls (I reasoned) mature more quickly than boys. Spolita, my own, my joy, had seen only thirty-four summers, but she was old in the head and as rich in experience as a Cornish beam-engine. Besides (I ratiocinated) I was not the first rogue male to fall for the charms of a young thing only five-sixths his age. Algera Nebrisko was only twenty-five when

she dallied with Fert Gessler: Connie Chatterton was barely thirty when she was tripped by Adam the gardener . . . Oh, yes, there were precedents enough.

Then there were the motels. You see, I was managing inspector of Albioni Enterprises Ltd., the first really *big* company to latch on to the notion that drive-in hotels had a future in Britain. And naturally I had access to every one of our establishments, or "units" as we preferred to call them. In 1958 we had five motels in operation—at Eastbourne, Pangbourne, Sherborne, Sittingbourne and Hartbourne—and it was my duty to see that local and area managers were right on their toes.

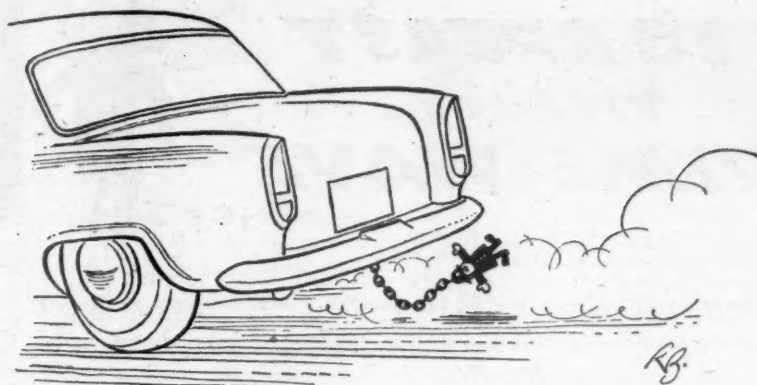
That's where Spolita came in. Little did she realize, as we made our rounds, that I was "using" her, making a convenience of her. We would travel to a motel, check in under assumed names—usually "Mr. Smith" and "Miss Robinson"—and retire to our respective chalets. Sometimes we lunched together, sometimes we compared notes, and I am sure that the minx suspected *nothing*. She was completely in the dark about my real intentions. I swear it.

And then quite suddenly we both knew that we had been in love right from the start—when she was in the typing pool and I merely Mr. Kenneth's secretary.

What followed was dreamlike in quality and, I suppose, mildly wicked. Spolita and I started courting *in the company's time*. We would check in at some motel, give the place a perfunctory once-over, examine the stock, linen, and so on, and then devote our evenings exclusively to each other. What was it in Spolita that held me in thrall? The nymphet was not conventionally beautiful, though in certain lights—the gleam of a detergent or a phosphorescent sock, or the glow of a cigarette-end—she looked a proper bobby-dazzler. I enjoyed (I admit it) the signs and tokens of her physical immaturity. The ridge made by her spectacles on the bridge of her nose, the thick downy hair on the palms of her hands, the careless way



"I am well aware, Miss Wilcox, it's about the travels and adventures of a little twelve-year-old-girl, but . . .



she had of sniffing instead of blowing her nose. Oh, yes, and her silly little habit of striking matches on her earrings.

I tried, I remember, to do the decent, done thing. I realized that nothing could come of my mad infatuation, that my nymphet was too *jeune* for true love, and of course that marriage was unthinkable. I had too much wife back home in Leeds to make that possible.

So I left my Spolita. I just packed up, without even resigning from Albioni Enterprises (which meant sacrificing the travelling clock and testimonial), and slipped into the waiting, beckoning shadows. I travelled light in the Farina, eschewing motels and drinking more than agreed with me. And everywhere I went—Ripon, Burslem, Wrexham, Harrogate, Roxburgh, Godalming, Southgate, Crewe, Broadway, Loughborough . . . I saw my Spolita. She was there behind the counter of M. & S., on top of the East Grinstead bus, in the Shepshed Espresso, in the Wrexham meat market. I ached for her. I could not live without my nymphet.

Pleading temporary insanity I returned to Albioni Enterprises and surprisingly was reinstated. Oh, the joy of once more breathing the same air as Spolita! Oh, the ecstasy of hearing the scuffle of her pumps on the office lino! For a month or two I hid my joy behind impassive features and made no move to bring her back into my arms.

It was a careless word from Eldritch, the invoice clerk, that blew my dream-world to smithereens. Over draughts one lunch-hour he said "By the way, that hag Spolita is carrying a torch for Brennan in Publicity. Dig that!" I am not sure, but I think I fainted. I certainly lost the game, smoked two cigs. in double-quick time to soothe my

nerves, and pulled out my pools coupon. Brennan! That pimply little squirt. Brennan was assistant traffic controller, a nasty, sweaty Inter B.Sc. of thirty-five—an adolescent, pigtail-pulling lout. A horror! How could my Spolita . . .! In my rage I think I put Rangers to draw with Hamilton Academicals.

I knew what to do. My Spolita was knocking up £8 15s. per *semaine* less deductions, not nearly enough to satisfy her high-octane craving for seamless stockings, Nat King Cole discs and Poppysham sherry. If her favours were to be bought I would buy. In Stock Exchange parlance I would bull, buy for a rise.

But, oh, how treacherous my nymphet had become! Spolita ridiculed my terms, derided my passion, professed that she was in love with Brennan. In vain did I load her with presents and change her Olivetti ribbon. All to no purpose did I write notes of assignation. I was spurned.

Spolita and Brennan left Albioni Enterprises. And at a respectable distance I followed—from one motel to another. What hurt was the thought that it was I who had taught her *everything*—how to docket and cross-file, how to check stores shrinkage, and how to use *Bradshaw* . . . the lot.

She is gone from me quite, married, with four or five bonny children, and seemingly happy. My nymphet lives on only in my dreams. And as I sit here penning this confessional I wonder where and when it was that I lost out with my lovely. Am I mad, deranged? Am I a hopeless wanton? A fool?

I shall write it all down exactly as it occurred and hope that my little Spolita and perhaps two million others will read the sad, sad tale.

Why we Lost the Battle of Hastings

The long-drawn-out inquest continues (as on other political defeats)

1. Were the *tactics* at fault? We all fought on foot; the Normans were well off for cavalry. This was an unfair advantage, but wasn't it a bit unimaginative to keep our men standing there in a serried mass behind their interlocked shields? Solidarity is not enough; there must be initiative.

2. Was the *leadership* wrong? Godwineson's sincerity (to call him by his more familiar name, Harold, would confuse the issue) was never in question, but was the inspiration there? Was he well advised to agree to the banishment of Tostig, that great raider of Wales, thus turning his brother into an enemy? "Calculating machine" sneers apart, he clearly miscalculated by keeping our men and ships in readiness on the south coast from May to September and then breaking the whole party up when provisions failed just before October.

3. What about the *image*? It is idle to deny the impact of Duke William's personality. At one stage he was unhorsed and the cry went up that he was dead, but mounting another horse he raised his helmet so that all could see him and thus rallied his men. Meeting the people face to face has won battles before, and will again.

4. Was *technique* clumsy? It is easy to laugh at "buffoonery"; don't be too ready to underestimate its influence. As the Norman troops started to move out to the attack, a juggling minstrel named Taillefer rode forward tossing and catching his sword. Playing to the gallery? Perhaps, but he ran a couple of men through before being overpowered. This sort of thing goes down well with a certain type.

5. Conclusions. It is an understatement to dismiss the Norman Conquest as a setback rather than a disaster. If the lost ground is to be regained we need a new look. Javelins, stone hammers, spears, long-handled axes, swords and daggers, on which we relied exclusively, have served their turn well in their day but they lack the modern appeal of the Normans' admittedly flashy crossbowmen.

— LESLIE MARSH



HOW TO BREAST THE CRIME WAVE



The dark evenings are here, and law-abiding citizens are at the mercy of seasonal apprehensions over the latest crime statistics. These notes are designed to put them more actively on the defensive.

BURGLARS, HOW TO IDENTIFY

CAN you recognize a burglar when you see one? At a recent test organized by the Suburban Citizens'



The impatient financier. Take-over bids are getting too long-drawn-out and risky for him. He feels he wants something to show for his work. Specializes in lead from roofs and tins of fruit.

Defence League, nine out of ten people failed to spot the housebreaker in a line-up of twelve assorted men. Too few people realize that times have changed. In these days when nobody ever had it so good, cracksmen are no longer starving out-of-works in striped jerseys, with masks and torches and home-made jemmies. The next time you see a man climbing through your bathroom window at midnight, don't be misled by his bowler hat and briefcase: he's up to no good.

On these pages, for your guidance, are some typical present-day burglar-types in a handy instant-recognition form (as used by the C.I.D.)

BIGAMISTS, HOW TO SPOT

BIGAMISTS are almost invariably male. Their socks are neatly darned, they don't flick ash over the carpet, and they tend to take you to the cheaper seats at the cinema. Many of them have a habit of unexpectedly

jamming on a false beard in the middle of cocktail parties, or even of rushing from the room with their hands over their faces. Their pockets frequently contain faded snapshots of glum women paddling at Ilfracombe, and there is quite a chance that they might suddenly start calling you Edna. They do not as a rule believe in long engagements. Sometimes men in plain clothes call to see them, asking for them by another name. They will be surprisingly knowledgeable in matters of household management, and will have a detailed account of your private fortune in a little notebook. They keep looking over their shoulders.

GRAB-GANGS, HOW TO FOOL

DO you ever get the feeling, as you are walking from the bank, that



The bored housewife. She has never been really contented since her hubby said she needn't go to work any more. Usually enters by the back door, brews a pot of tea and makes off with the telly or a bottle of scent.

you have just been thrown into a doorway with a dull ache at the back of your neck, and that your bag full of wages is being driven off down the street in a plain van with fake number plates? This morbid sensation is quite a common twentieth-century indisposition,

and is frequently symptomatic of a mild attack of daylight robbery. The cause may generally be traced to the British working-man's fear of wages in the form of a cheque, and some of the best brains



The eleven-plus victim. Doesn't actually need the money, but despite an adequate allowance feels insecure, unwanted. Breaks legs off chairs, takes gaudy rings and stair-carpets.

in the country (those, that is, which aren't already planning *coups* themselves) are concentrating on methods of prevention. Probably the most striking so far is the All-Purpose Weatherproof Anti-Grab Machine. At the first approach of a sinister stranger a delicate electronic mechanism in the wage-bag releases a small but hungry Dobermann Pinscher. At the same time all motor traffic within a radius of two hundred yards is immobilized, a recorded voice continually cries "The game is up!" a revolving jet of indelible ink renders everybody in sight dark green, the street is sealed off at each end by an invisible ray, a television camera is automatically switched on and records the scene in colour, with direct sound, and coded radio signals are sent back to police headquarters giving details of height, weight, physical peculiarities, radiation density and the serial numbers of the notes. Priced at

£18,000, this device could turn Friday into a happy day, and make a routine visit to the bank a memorable experience.

BLACKMAILERS, HOW TO FOIL

RECOMMENDED action is in two parts: first, a full confession to the injured parties before the blackmailer gets to them; second a cautious life from now on. As to the confessions, these will require a period of secluded thought with a notebook, while your past passes before your eyes in terms of spare wheels picked up and not reported to the police, private 'phone calls charged to the office, slander spoken at church bazaars or similar unbridled occasions, and other dangerous indiscretions. Do not overlook sex. The man from the Performing Right Society who saw you kiss the doyenne of the Olde Tyme Dancing Display, backstage



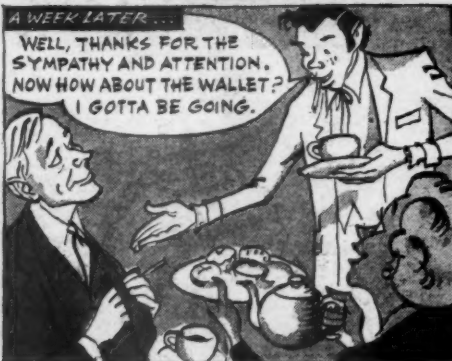
The man next door. Is depressed because all the adventure seems to have gone out of life somehow. Sneaks in when you're at the pictures and pinches Premium Bonds, bread and electric-light bulbs.

in the Memorial Hall in 1951, may well have been waiting his time to pounce. Think of everyone you should confess to, from your wife up, and confess, at the same time destroying all old correspondence of every kind. This may land you in gaol or the Divorce Court, but it doesn't leave the blackmailer a leg to stand on.

Living the cautious life may seem

difficult at first, but will become a matter of habit in time. You must not only live blamelessly but also *appear* to do so. Chance meetings with married lady friends in the slot-machine arcade on Brighton pier are to be avoided. The man at the change-counter might tell a tale that you would find it extremely difficult to discredit. Make a rule to undertake no treasurerships; rumours of a deficit in the jumble-sale proceeds are meat and drink to the practised blackmailer. Stay away from dances. Leave a seat between you and the next customer if you go alone to the pictures. Cure yourself of the habit of staring at girls' legs on the Underground, even if your only motive is to try to decide whether they are wearing stockings or not. Lastly, open a "B" A/c with your bank and try to put a little money away regularly. However cautious you are, you never know when you may have to pay out after all.

COSH-BOYS, HOW TO CURE



A Distracting Episode

I. Interrupted Evening

By R. G. G. PRICE



I WAS pasting notices into my scrapbook of some of the West End shows our Dramatic Society might be doing later on and Elfrida was experimenting with a saffron-flavoured risotto, when a Mr. Hodges called to tell us we had won a Football Pool and to invite us to some sort of evening reception.

"We go out very little," Elfrida told him. "Our friends seek us out when they feel in need of company and the Dramatic Society keeps us free of cobwebs otherwise."

I asked if there would be games at this party. We are not, to be honest, very lively folk.

Mr. Hodges made what was evidently a prepared speech: "Before you receive your cheque for £215,735, which will be handed to you by a star of stage and screen, there are just a few little formalities. You will appreciate that we must protect all our investors by careful investigation of big wins. Now, can you produce the counterfoil of the Postal Order you sent?"

"If you are entitled to demand it," I replied. "I am a Vice-President of the Lodbury Branch of the Defenders of Liberty. There is altogether too much officious inquisitiveness in the modern world." To soften my words I added "No doubt you are hired to snoop and are not wholly responsible for your actions."

At this point Hrowsitha, who had been dressing her doll in sackcloth and

putting ashes on its head, something to do with her Divinity homework, I believe, joined in our conversation. We feel strongly that children should participate in adult activities as early as possible. Her voice had not quite recovered from tonsillitis and she croaked her question, which was, "If your name is Hodges, why are the initials on your brief-case 'B. J.-L.'?"

Her mother was quick to seize the opportunity for a little lesson. "Mr. Hodges might easily be embarrassed by that question. We must be kind and forbearing to everyone, Withie, not just to those we like. Now, isn't it time for your timpani practice?"

Mr. Hodges began to unfold a form rather hesitantly. I firmly but courteously refused to answer his questions. To pad the impact of my public-spirited intransigence Elfrida whipped him up a little batch of brain pancakes.

Mr. Hodges then said that a sum of money as large as the one we had won would need careful looking after and that a colleague who knew all about investments would be calling on us and advising us to see our bank manager.

"If he knows all about investments, why is he still a colleague of yours?" Hrowsitha asked.

I have always tried to inculcate acuteness and I patted her on the head, luckily, perhaps, as I found she had been parking her gum there again. This is a habit of which neither Dr. Higgs at the Child Guidance Clinic nor Dr. Jwalski



at the Outpatients Psychological Clinic nor Dr. Lincoln Jefferson Mohammed whom we have consulted privately can cure her. Part of the reason for their slow progress is probably just that in our anxiety for a cure we have allowed them to treat her simultaneously. Day after day at breakfast we all three talk over which of her dreams would interest which psychologist, though Dr. Mohammed works mainly with electricity.

Elfrida was waiting patiently for Mr. Hodges to reply to her daughter when our friend and neighbour Sidney Jackson called with his designs for the costumes. Our autumn production is to be a very popular London success, *Look Back in Anger*, and Sidney Jackson's colourful creations should go a long way towards making its rather difficult dialogue palatable to our sometimes slow-witted audience. He knows our home well and in his quiet way he set about placing his drawings where we could all see them.

Mr. Hodges beamed at him and said briskly "Are you a neighbour? You must come to their party and bring your other neighbours too."

Sidney Jackson very sensibly said that if they were coming he would not, as most of them have joined in a petition to the Council against him. I was still worrying over the suggestion that some busybody would be trying to bring me and my bank manager together. I have nothing against Lever. On the only occasion I have had to arrange any business through him he has been competent enough. It is merely that between the jovial man and the reflective there can be no really satisfying relationship. When he tells me humorous anecdotes I simply cannot cap them. I do not have the right kind of memory.

Mr. Hodges got up to leave. He gave



"Poor old Jones—still using last year's model."

us instructions about where and when the party would be and told us how many invitations we could issue on behalf of his organization.

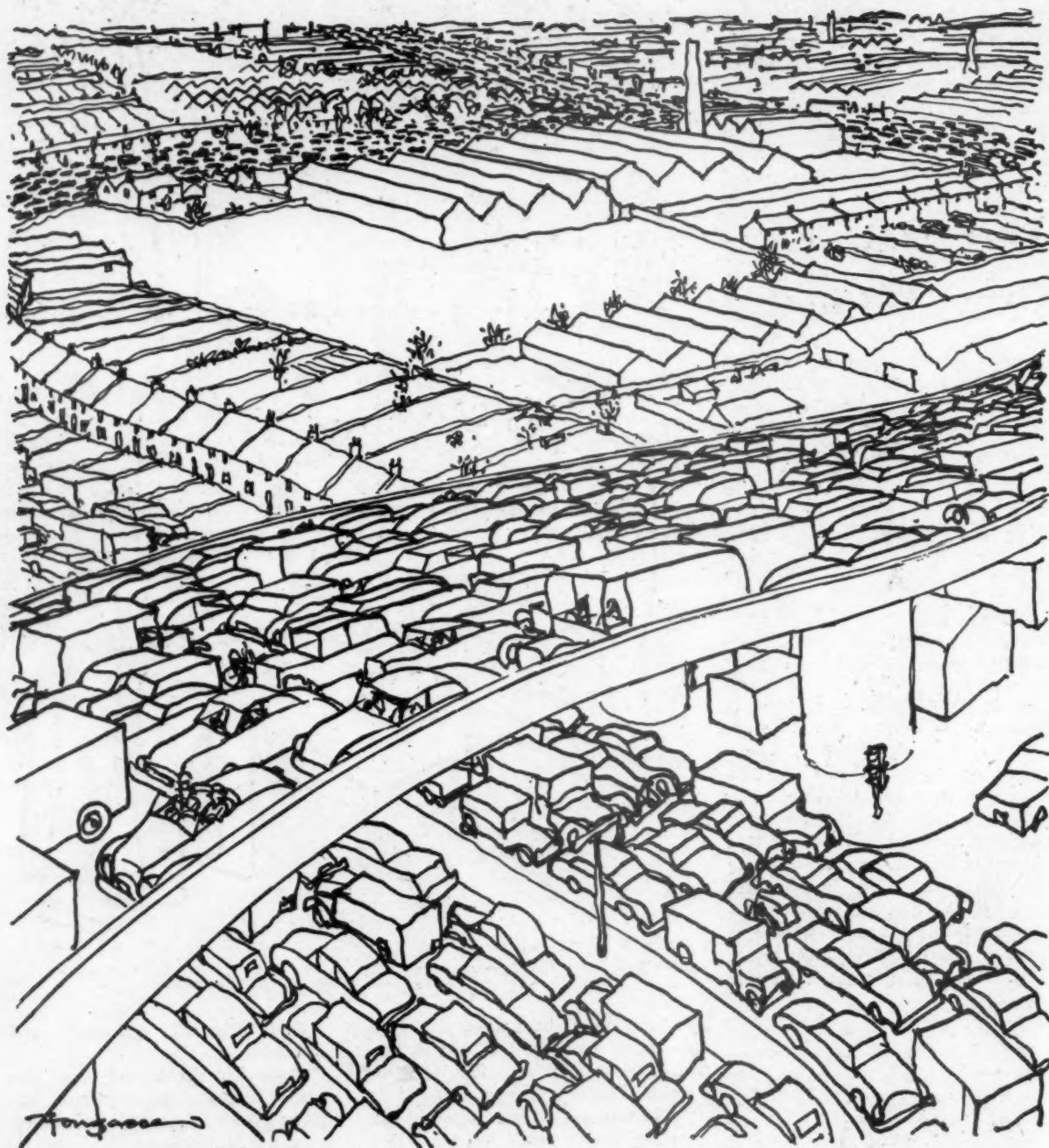
The interruption had put our whole evening out of gear. We work to a narrow margin of time and energy. As we began examining Sidney Jackson's designs Elfrida said thoughtfully "These invitations would be a way of working off a good deal of hospitality that we owe. There is Aunt Julia-Ann and Uncle 'Wipers' Gogarty and that creepy little Mrs. 'Restawhile.'"

"And Pamela's grannie," said Hroswitha.

"Paymaster Lidd and that new curate," suggested Sidney Jackson, who said he had taken one of his inexplicable likings to Mr. Hodges. He asked us what the party was celebrating and we told him that we had won £200,000 in a Football Pool. He said that on the whole he thought his present designs the best since Mr. Bolfrey, which, indeed, they appeared to resemble in some measure.

Next Week: Tedious Civilities





"So this is a fly-over."

A series defining moments of crisis and redirection in private lives

turning point



By Malcolm Bradbury

The Man with the Grey Flannel Head

I WAS once a student at an English provincial university. A strange youth, who wore pink intellectual shirts and clip-on bow-ties that kept falling, everlastingly, into cups of black coffee, I could be seen among the grotesque Victoriana of the institution, carrying volumes of Proust and borrowing cigarettes from admirers. I would sit for hours in the entrance hall of the university, ostentatiously producing for correction a large sheet of proofs. "Who is that?" visiting celebrities would ask as they passed through on their way to give yet another lecture on the principles of literary criticism (that was the year when everyone was giving lectures on literary criticism; if you saw a crowd of students sitting around in a lecture room, trying to look as much like the Oxford Union as possible, you knew they were poised for yet another lecture on the principles of literary criticism—unless they were just in there waiting for the rain to go off). "That's the editor of our literary magazine," some student, mindful of my reputation, would reply.

At this time it was not as respectable to be a member of an English provincial university as it is now, and few were more embarrassed about it than I. I was writing a novel about provincial university life. "It'll never sell," people kept telling me, "no one wants to read about provincial universities." I grew more and more depressed. I saw there was no future for people like myself. You never met John Lehmann; you never saw T. S. Eliot; people didn't mention your name to publishers when

they got back to London. There was a fallow spell in there when to be a provincial was simply to be nothing, and provincial universities had the aroma of workhouses, out of which no literary talent could properly be expected to come.

One day I suddenly realized that my student life was shortly to come to an end. For three years I had spent my time lying on golf courses reading Kafka; now I had to face the big world. For three years a grateful government, impressed by my performance in the Higher School Certificate examination, had paid me a small stipend to meet my wants, which were few. All that I seemed to spend money on was buying paperback books, mailing home my laundry, and buying gin-and-limes for little scholarly girls in tweeds with whom I was in love. It was a blissful, withdrawn existence. It didn't seem fair that it had to end. Moreover, three years studying English Literature had totally unfitted me for any form of gainful employment. I was an excrescence

on the world. Nor was my literary career exactly booming; affording an average income of some five pounds a year, it seemed hardly likely even to cover the costs of mailing home my laundry. For persons of my ilk the world had few niches. There was publishing; but you had to be someone's nephew. There was the academic world; but you had to have the approbation of Lord David Cecil. There was advertising; but once again you had to have been at Oxford, meeting people...

None the less, a few days later the doorman at Saul and Protheroe, Limited, accredited advertising agents in Mayfair, was arrested in his duties by a strange sight. A thin youth, obviously from the provinces, wearing plum-coloured trousers much too small for him and apparently carrying all his possessions in a battered briefcase, was hovering uncertainly outside the establishment, scratching his red ears with a finger that trembled extravagantly with trepidation. The return half of a railway ticket was clutched in one hard-clenched fist, lest some of the rogues who haunt the Big City should make off with it. It was myself, come to claim an interview with Mr. Fazackerley, the personnel officer. Outside the premises, a charming Georgian house with brass carriage lamps on the outer walls to add *chic*, a row of motor scooters stood placidly. A steady stream of well-dressed persons in bowler hats passed in and out of the doorway, getting into taxis and calling one another "dear boy." Within, Kneller portraits and plaster ceilings contributed to the



atmosphere of mercantile good taste. Mr. Fazackerley, natty and charming, sat behind a white desk whispering secrecies into a dictaphone. A red carnation glowed in his buttonhole. "Take a pew, dear boy," he said. I had the strange feeling that my teeth were falling out one by one. "What makes you think you want to work in advertising?" asked Mr. Fazackerley.

"I like to write," I said. He looked doubtful. "I see you got a first in English," he said.

"Yes," I said.

"We usually prefer people with seconds," he said, "people with firsts are too . . . academic."

"I'm not academic," I said. I thought a moment more and added "It wasn't a very good first."

"Why didn't you go to Oxford?" asked Mr. Fazackerley.

"I couldn't afford it," I said. Fazackerley smelled his flower and frowned. I saw that this was a bad answer.

"It's a good investment," he said, "you meet people, get in with the right

crowd. Don't get too serious, you know."

"I'm not serious," I said hastily.

"I see you have some agency experience," he said.

"Yes, I worked in an agency in Nottingham," I said.

"In what capacity?"

"Oh, I was drawing these sketches of carpets, you know, and writing copy, and taking blocks to the printers. I did a lot of things. I had a lot of experience." I pulled out a folder of samples. Drawings of tubes of toothpaste tumbled out and all over the highly polished floor. I bounded to my feet and scrubbed them together. Mr. Fazackerley did not look at them. "No literary ambitions, I hope?" he asked. "No," I said, getting up from under his desk.

"I think we can give you a try," said Mr. Fazackerley. "Put you through your paces. See what you can do. Six months' probation."

He took me by the arm and led me through a succession of offices in which

neat young men and girls in low-cut dresses held manila files in one hand and talked in hushed tones to one another. There was no smell of paint, no sweaty artists shouting at girls through upstairs windows; it was nothing like the agency I had known. Mr. Fazackerley introduced me to great quantities of people, all of whom he called "dear boy" or "Stella darling." Finally he showed me to a small but costly desk, set in the corner of an office, which he said was to be mine.

Suddenly, looking at the desk, I had a vision of myself sitting here, writing about the straps of brassières, while my motor scooter sat outside the premises, and while I called people "dear boy" and "Stella darling." I saw all the suits that I would buy, and the parties I would have to go to, and the new American musicals that I would have to talk about. I wanted to die. But I talked to Mr. Saul and Mr. Protheroe and Miss Whelk (who was eating caviar on cheese crackers and told me about the accounts they had). Then I went back to St. Pancras and got on my train for the provinces. The provinces suddenly seemed clean and wholesome and honest. When I arrived home there was a letter from the University of London, offering me a research scholarship to write a thesis. I knew that I had been saved. I wrote to Mr. Fazackerley and thanked him for his kindness; but I said I felt I had some way to go before I was ready for advertising. The world seemed wonderful. For two more years I could lie on golf courses and read Kafka and buy gin-and-limes for tweedy girls with spots on their faces. And a few days after this the world changed for people like me. Mr. Amis had published *Lucky Jim*, and Mr. Spender was complaining about all this upsurge of provincial writing, calling it "a rebellion of the lower middlebrows" which had "an aroma of the inferiority complex about its protest." It had suddenly become *à la mode* to be the sort of person I was. I was in the right stream after all. I mailed home my laundry with light heart and got on with my thesis.

☆

"Everyone thought runaway boy Terence Gargon was planning to try to reach the moon. But, in fact, he got only as far as Scarborough about 45 miles from home . . ."

Daily Express

There's modern youth for you.



"Hold on—I've got something just coming in you might fancy."



How to Take-Over

LAST July at the close of one of the most hate-productive take-over battles of the year (that in which Mr. Charles Clore's Sears Holdings failed very profitably to secure control of Watney Mann, the brewers) the Governor of the Bank of England exclaimed "Enough is enough." He sensed that the publicity attaching to these affairs and the suspicion of quick and undeserved profits surrounding them was doing the fair name of the City a great deal of harm. He suggested that rather than wait for restrictive legislation the City should set about drawing up its own code of conduct in such matters.

This has now been done and a discreetly named booklet, "Notes on Amalgamations of British Businesses" (never once are the dirty words "bid" or "take-over" mentioned) has been drawn up by the Establishment of the City—the banks, the issuing houses, investment trusts, insurance companies, the Stock Exchange—in fact the lot.

This opens by restating some fundamental and self-evident truths that tend to be all too easily forgotten amid the sense of outrage created by the more highly publicized of these battles. Among them are that there should be no restriction on a free market in shares; that the shareholder faced with bids for his property should have the right to decide for himself; above all, that amalgamations are an essential part of the process of growth in business enterprise.

Amalgamations become charged with hostility and also with the glamour of financial battle when the bidder is resisted by the board of the biddee, or when there is more than one bidder for the company. That is when the issue becomes interesting for the general public and when the news hounds get busy.

Such battles are not condemned out of hand. The take-over bid usually has, as its ultimate result, the fullest utilization of available assets and in the past has almost always proved to be in the national interest. Some rules should,

however, be observed not only in the interests of decency and dignity but in those of the shareholders around whose property the battle rages. Some of these are:

That an offer to get control of a company should in the first place be made to the board and not direct to the shareholders.

That a board receiving such an offer must have the right to demand guarantees, or at least convincing assurances, that the bidder has the cash or the credit to fulfil his offer.

That in the preliminary discussions there should be no leakage of information to the market but that as soon as possible the news of a definite bid should be made public.

That if the board finds against the offer it should give the bidder every facility to put his case to the shareholders (at his expense, of course).

That the shareholder be given the fullest information by both sides to enable him to make the right decision.

That the question of compensation for redundant employees, including the "golden handshake" to directors, should be carefully considered.

This is probably as good a set of rules as could be devised for meeting situations as fluid, variable and unpredictable as those euphemistically termed here "amalgamations of businesses." What, it will be asked, are the powers of sanction behind these hints? They are the most powerful of them all, namely the collective disfavour of the City organizations which have drawn up the rules. Any departure from them will not be worth the candle for anyone who has his being and interests in the world of company finance.

— LOMBARD LANE

In the Country



Why Are They Proud?

THE English farmer is the most conceited animal on earth: his arrogance is only matched by admirals in the Navy. There is some justification for the latter, little for the former. If I were Minister of Agriculture I would subsidize English farmers to travel abroad. A week-end around The Hague would show our horticulturists that they were a lot of slovenly crofters compared to the Dutch. I would send our dairymen to Normandy and dispatch our smug horse-breeders to Hanover or Vienna and make them stay there until they saw enough to convince them that their own stables at home were filled with nothing better than nags.

Other industries have international shows or fairs. The English motor manufacturer has to compare his product with that from Italy or America. Our engineers know now that they can learn from Milan or Leipzig. Even Cambridge physicists are now beginning to admit that the Mond Lab. has not all the answers. But the English farmer remains impervious to criticism.

He boasts that he now produces sixty per cent more than he did before the war. That is nothing to be proud of: it is an admission that our farms were in a filthy state in 1938 and that we did little but ranch our land or crop it for rabbits. Hitler did more for our farms than any Minister of Agriculture has ever achieved. It is true of course that Russia and the Argentine come here still to buy our stock. We do have the blood; we do have a few good stockbreeders, but our general level of productivity is abysmally low and many of our farmers are as ignorant as peons. There is no way of convincing them of their inadequacy. The English countryman believes he is more skilled than anybody else, that his crops yield more, and even that he works harder.

If the English farmer won't deign to travel I suppose the only thing we can do is to lease a bit of Wiltshire to the Japanese and invite some Italian peasants over to colonize the derelict valleys of Devonshire. I dare say my own farm could support twenty Chinese families without losing any of the land which I use—or misuse. England is the most fertile garden on the face of the earth. Its fertility has reduced us to complacency, a harvest of smugness.

— RONALD DUNCAN

☆

"For two years he lived near Penury, in London . . ."—*Liverpool Daily Post*
Where Carey Street leads to, of course.

Toby Competitions

No. 87—Hybrid

COMPETITORS are invited to write the opening of one kind of book in the manner of another, e.g. Diplomat's Memoirs in the style of a Western; sensitive novel about self-pitying only son in style of Frank Richards. Limit: 150 words.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive a book token to the value of one guinea. Entries by first post on Friday, November 20, to TOBY COMPETITION No. 87, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 84

(D/983/7a/B(6))

There was a wide and varied response to the request for new forms to supplement those which Government Departments issue to the public. The six-question limit proved cramping; apparently many competitors were unable to envisage a form as short as that, and resorted to up to twenty sub-questions. The winner is

L. S. CROWDER
9 DEAN ROAD
WOODTHORPE
NOTTINGHAM

with a convincing bureaucratic interpretation of legislative intentions:

INCOME TAX—BENEFITS IN KIND (EXTENSION)—ACT, 1959
Form P11.D (Supplementary)

For assessment under Sections 493 to 498 of the above Act, you are required to furnish, forthwith, the following particulars:

1. In relation to car use, if any, claimed, state estimated annual saving on boot and/or shoe repairs . . .
2. Weekly value of tea/coffee provided at work. (If no sugar taken, write N.S. against your answer and reduce your estimate accordingly.) . . .
3. If you maintain a fountain-pen for both business and private

use, state annual number of fillings (a) at work . . . (b) at home . . . and business use claimed . . .

4. Are washing facilities provided at your place of work? . . . If so, state quality . . . frequency of towel replacement . . . and any additional refinements available (e.g. pumice stone) . . .
5. Any benefits in kind, of whatsoever nature, not included under the foregoing heads . . .

Runners-up:

CONSTRUCTION OF ARKS ACT, B.C. 7000

(To be submitted two by two)

1. I/We . . . of . . . hereby apply for a permit to construct an ark in accordance with the above-mentioned Act.
2. Proposed dimensions: Length cubits
Breadth cubits
Height cubits
3. Estimated quantity of gopher wood required, to the nearest cubic cubit . . .
(NOTE: notwithstanding this application, a separate timber licence must be applied for on form A/314/B/413a.)
4. For what duration is it intended that the Ark should be in use? . . .
5. State the number and types of animals it is proposed to accommodate.
(NOTE: This question must be completed in detail. "Two of all types" is not sufficient.) . . .
6. Signed . . . this . . . day of . . . 69 . . . B.C.

F. P. Pitfield, Hillbutts; Butt Lane, Bere Regis, Dorset

DEAR SIR/MADAM,—I have received your application for a child. Please complete the following form and quote this reference in all correspondence.—FAM/LIM/D/983/7a/B(6).

1. Have you applied to this office within the last year? . . . If so, with what result? . . .
2. Have there been multiple births in either family within the last fifty years? . . .
3. How many children have you at present living? . . . (You are entitled to two basic children, with one further child for every 5,000 acres you possess.)
4. How much land do you possess (in acres)? . . .
Your application will be dealt with in due course.

Yours faithfully,

MANAGER, Family Limitation Office
Mrs. P. Burton, 10 Marlborough Park Avenue, Sidcup, Kent

APPLICATION FOR LICENCE TO UTILIZE ANIMAL (OTHER THAN EQUINE, BOVINE OR CANINE QUADRUPED) AS BEAST OF BURDEN ON PUBLIC HIGHWAY

1. What is the breed or zoological classification of the animal? . . .
2. How many legs has it? . . .
3. Does the animal suffer from amnesia, apoplexy, bromidrosis, relapsing fever, or varicose veins? . . .
4. Do you require the animal to transport: (a) adults . . . (b) children under fourteen . . . (c) other animals . . . (d) fresh fruit or vegetables . . . (e) other food . . . (f) explosives . . . (g) sports goods or ecclesiastical furnishings . . . (h) printed matter . . .
5. Has the animal studied the Highway Code? . . .

C. L. Lyall, 5 Weston Road, Petersfield, Hants

DEAR SIR,—The Ministry of Education is anxious to discover whether there is any correlation between chalk-dust and working days lost by teachers through respiratory diseases. Would you please complete and return this form:

1. Number of days absent from school last year . . .
2. Causes of absence (give details) . . .
3. Average length of chalk used per week . . . ins.
(NOTE:—Multiply length of new sticks by number of sticks used, and subtract $\frac{1}{2}$ in. of each stick for unusable butt. Do NOT include pieces thrown at pupils.)
4. Estimated strength of draughts round blackboard . . . m.p.h.

Andrew Forrest, Trinity College, Oxford

- A.94.1. Give details of all monies, revenues, either in monies or kind, whatever, due to you, your heirs and dependants, from the revenues of danegeld, tithes, pannage, fiefage, corkage, etc. (If you claim exemption in whole or part under the relevant Acts of 1848, return the statutory declaration in triplicate under separate cover) . . .
- A.94.2. Number of children residing with you born in or out of wedlock . . .
- A.94.3. Age and sex of wife (see note 45) . . .
- A.94.4. Number of rabbits, tame birds, etc. to be housed in the outbuilding which is the subject of this application . . .
- A.94.5. Number of servants or grooms to be employed in the maintenance of the aforesaid building . . .
- A.94.6. Do you wish to appeal against the refusal of this application? . . .

E. O. Parrott, 47 Daver Court, Chelsea Manor St. S.W.3

THEN AS NOW

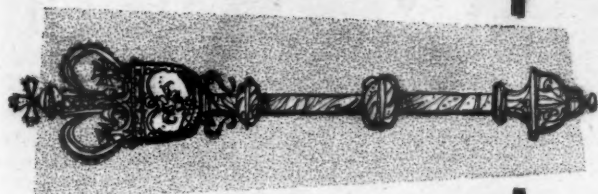


First Pessimist. "I'M GLAD IT'S ALL OVER; IT'S BEEN A TERRIBLE TIME. BUT THINK WHAT THE NEXT WAR WILL BE LIKE!"

Second Pessimist. "YES—AND THE NEXT PEACE!"

November 20 1918

Essence



of Parliament

TRAMP, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching—into the new Parliament's first division lobby on Monday, but as near as a whisker they did not make it. Mr. Callaghan, who was supposed to be moving the Opposition's amendment about colonial policy, was, like Lord Clive, so astonished at his own moderation that he almost forgot to move it. The whole debate was rather like that. Central Africa has a little missed fire as a party issue. So now the mood is to treat it as so important that it must be kept above party. The Opposition deserve credit for their moderation and readiness to let Mr. Macleod find his way around before they weigh into him. Perhaps discretion a little goes hand in hand with generosity. Mr. Lennox-Boyd had many qualities but he was the sort of schoolmaster out of whom the boys could often get a rise. Mr. Macleod is different. He is an extraordinarily able debater and one has to know one's stuff pretty well before it is wise to cross swords with him. Mrs. Eirene White, like a female Pope, was prepared just to hint a fault and hesitate dislike. It was as far as any Labour Member was willing to go. The rest thought it safer to sit there silently nodding their heads like a lot of Chinese mandarins. Colonel Beamish said that there was not very much difference between the two sides of the House, and Mr. Stonehouse sat bolt upright at this, alarmed at the thought that he did not differ very much from Colonel Beamish. Lord Ogmore in the Lords would have Mr. Macleod wandering round Africa

in a bush shirt and a pair of slacks, confident that nobody would notice. It was the new Liberal look.

On Tuesday Miss Jennie Lee led off by demanding the nationalization of oxygen. This was not a curtain-raiser for Lady Tweedsmuir's demand the next day for dehydrated fish so much as a lead-in for her husband's surprising conversion to the ranks of those who would have Parliament televised. Mr. Bevan had, it seemed, set out for Damascus without telling his fellow citizens anything about it. Mr. Gaitskell had not been consulted and greeted the proposal with an enormous yawn. In his speech later Mr. Gaitskell recalled how only the week before Mr. Bevan had spoken of "all those limitless stretches of arid desert" of Parliamentary debate. Would the Parliamentary programme be so very popular? But what was interesting was not so much the fact that Mr. Bevan had not consulted his colleagues as his reason for not doing so. His reason was that when one consulted colleagues "it passed through the interstices of the party machine so slowly that by the time it emerged it was only a mere substance of its former self." If this is what happens to the suggestions of a deputy leader of a party, what happens to the suggestions of a mere back-bencher? But in general Mr. Bevan's suggestion did not go down very well. All sorts of M.P.s who had been vocal in their complaints that they did not get their fair share on television under the present arrangement were by no means sure that they wanted to have

Miss Jennie Lee



Mr. Iain Macleod

Big Brother, in the shape of the British public, watching them all the time. They were prepared to televise but not to be televised at, and when one counted the number of them that stayed in the Chamber to listen to Mr. Heathcoat Amory one could understand why. Members are agreed that Parliament is in a bad way. They are prepared to do anything to restore its prestige—except to listen to one another's speeches. That would be asking too much.

They are all agreed that Parliament is in a bad way, but the debate produced at least one entirely original diagnosis of its disease—from Mr. Mackie, the newly elected Socialist Member for East Enfield. While others talked of too powerful Whips, of too heavy legislative programmes, of too many divisions and the rest, it was Mr. Mackie's view that all that was wrong with Parliament was that Members took sugar in their tea and then sat down in easy chairs. Let them instead drink a glass of milk, eat a slice of brown bread and a tomato and then go and work it off in the gymnasium and everything would be as right as rain.

The Prime Minister has at any rate lost one round on points in what little fighting there has been so far. Seldom has he been seen in such confusion as he was when he tried to explain Lord Hailsham's duties in his new post as Minister of Science. Mr. Bevan got in a good crack when he accused him of a liking for sticking "flamboyant labels on empty luggage." Mr. Macmillan laughed heartily. It was about all that he could do.

On Thursday a languid House considered film quotas. Ears were more a-cock for those who were counting votes upstairs than for what was going on in the Chamber. Would the Shadow Cabinet elections tell us anything about the future shape of the Labour party? They did not tell us much except that his Parliamentary colleagues apparently think less highly of Mr. Philip Noel-Baker than do the Nobel prize-givers. An unkind critic might suggest that the reason perhaps is that they have to listen to him more often.

— PERCY SOMERSET

☆

"DECREE FOR ST. PETER'S WIFE."
Isle of Thanet Gazette

Showing her the gate?

Always in Vogue

MR. RIMMER, the Willesden headmaster who will not admit Wendy Hyde to his school in a figure-hugging suit and stiletto heels, may seem to have his problems. But at least he only has to draw the line; being a man he doesn't have to compete with it at the same time.

I was smart once, when I taught in a nice, old-fashioned girls' school in the Midlands. They still read Angela Brazil up there, amid the slag heaps, and have crushes on athletic members of the staff. The seniors all want to go to Birmingham University and they wear lisle stockings to school. I can remember to this day the furore I caused when I appeared in my modified version of the A-line. I counted for something in those palmy days; I was the dashing Miss R.

Teaching the young London secretary in embryo, at a girls' school near London, is vastly different. They think about little else but fashion and the opposite

**FOR
WOMEN**



sex and as for the idea that school uniform cripples a girl's fashion sense—phooey! It actually fosters it! After all, success is always sweeter when great obstacles have been overcome. We see all the latest "lines" travestied by five hundred school-girls almost before Veronica Papworth can write "knife-pleat."

I made my entry together with the vogue for headache bands. I dressed modestly for my first day, and planned to stun them all a day or two later with a blonde tortoiseshell band in my Italian-style hair-do. I soon observed that not only did every girl from the third year up seem to be wearing a band but that they all seemed to be wearing Italian hair-styles, too. The much-favoured cheek-curls, fixed with soap to withstand the rigours of hockey, etc., almost met over the nose in one or

two cases. I found myself casually running my fingers through my hair as we stood in Assembly, and pushing it back from my face.

"Ever thought of trying a rinse?" asked Shani kindly, after my second day. It was when IVB and I were in the middle of a history lesson but obviously I had not succeeded in making the dry bones even rattle. I was too shy at that time to ask her what shade she used.

Winter set in and we were told that the smart young set were wearing long woollen stockings or tights. I bought mine rather self-consciously one Saturday morning, a pair of scarlet woollen stockings and a pair of black. Some instinctive diffidence prevented me from wearing a pair of them on Monday morning. It was as well. My form awaited me demurely, eyes down-cast,



"Come along now—think of all those poor little starving boys in England."

Second Friday in the Month

UPON our rustic window-sill I lean,
Taking the morning air, the peace there is
In autumn sun, leaves dropping golden-green,
Haystacks, and those few straggling cottages—

Yet is this morning quite as others are?
Do I not sense a bright expectancy,
Anticipation, hope descried afar
And drawing near? Or, put it differently

In simpler words, has old Commander Cox
Just dragged a ton of something down his path?
Is Mrs. Thimble putting out a box
Next to what seems a bottle-laden bath?

And am I glad I noticed them? I say,
Darling, just lend a hand! It's Dustbin Day!

— ANGELA MILNE

permed hair in pig-tails, and with long, long legs in black stockings.

Shorter skirts were easy. They only had to turn the waist-bands of their skirts over three or four times and their bony knees were fashionably exposed. Life became more hazardous, true, as stiff petticoats then came into view. The Head was likely to pounce at any moment with a "Take off your petticoat and give it to me." We never did find out what she did with them all.

And now the skirt and longer jacket ensemble, which is a cinch. All those shrunken gaberdines come into their own. Mara appeared yesterday in a

jacket with a fitted bodice and long, flared peplum which came down to her thighs. Her narrow skirt in the same shade of grease-spotted navy protruded just the correct length below.

"Me sister's," she explained the coat briefly. Her sister is eight. "Told her to run to school if she wanted to keep warm. A kid like that didn't ought to feel the cold."

Shabby, food-stained and frayed it may be, but it is the new line, isn't it? And after I've seen it in all its distortions, over the next few days, it'll be stone cold dead for me!

— PATRICIA RILEY

Young Love

VERONICA said "Mother, have you ever noticed Peter Gardner across the road?"

"Several times; why?"

"Oh, nothing, Mother." Veronica set out her homework and chewed at her rubber. "Mother, isn't he marvellous? He got on my bus to-day and, Mother, he spoke to me. He said 'Excuse me.'"

"That's nice, get on with your homework, love."

"Next term at school we're doing Romeo and Juliet. It's all about young love. How old was Juliet? Mother, how old was she?"

"I don't know, but certainly older than you."

"Mother, I've always been advanced for my age haven't I? Young love is very sad. People die because of it. Mother, I don't think I shall need any supper to-night."

"I should think not, after all the tea you ate."

"Oh, Mother," Veronica wailed, "you're not being understanding. I expect you think I'm going through a phase. Mother, he's captain of the football team, and every Saturday he scores hundreds of goals. I'm going to watch next week. Do you think he'll notice me?"

"I expect so, but I thought you were going to tea with Pamela."

"Well I was, but I've explained everything to her and she says nothing should stand in the way of undying passion. He's going away to boarding-school soon. Isn't it awful? If I were a

bit older we could get engaged before he leaves. What if he forgets all about me?"

"I shouldn't worry if I were you."

"Mother, I wish I'd lived a hundred years ago when parents arranged marriages. It would make things a lot easier if Daddy could go and have a word with Mr. Gardner about Peter. He could sort of, well—reserve him for me. I don't suppose Daddy would—?"

"No, I'm sure he wouldn't. Hurry up with your homework or you won't be able to watch television."

"You think I'll get over it, don't you?"

"Well, yes. After all, I knew lots of boys before I met Daddy."

"Oh, Mother—it's just that I'm more steadfast than you. I know I love him because I feel sick every time I see him. I haven't told you the worst either. Elizabeth Anderson wants him too. We used to be friends and now she won't speak to me. Mother, wasn't Cousin Edith thwarted in love?"

"I suppose you could call it that."

"It's how I'll end up, I'm sure. An old maid doing good deeds all the time. Think how I'll suffer! Perhaps it would be better if I renounced the world and became a nun. You could come and visit me."

"Thank you, I will."

"Mother, I've written a poem—well a sonnet actually. It's about unrequited love. I'll read it to you if you like."

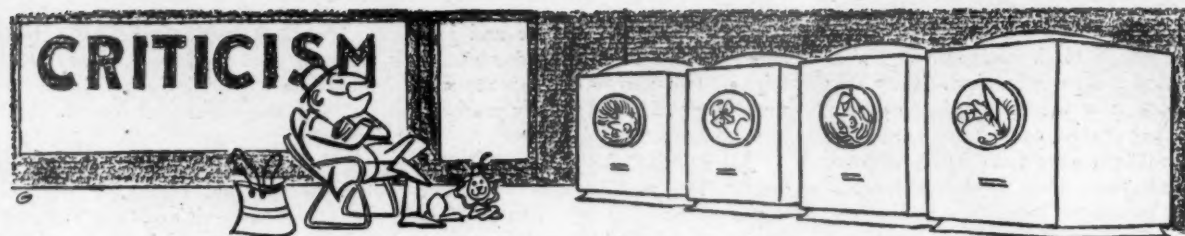
"Well—later. If you finish your lessons quickly I'll let you watch television for half an hour."

Veronica gave a sigh, then she reached for her exercise book, looked at it with pursed lips, and laboriously started to write: *amo, amas, amat . . .*

— DOROTHY DRAKE



"She grows more like you every day."



BOOKING OFFICE

The Wine Game

Vin. Edward Hyams. *Newnes*, 21/-
 A Word Book of Wine. Walter James.
Phoenix, 21/-
 In Praise of Wine. Alec Waugh. *Cassell*,
 21/-

THE wine snob is not only a sickening nuisance but a dangerous one—dangerous, because he pours a highly incendiary fuel on the anti-wine neurosis which is always smouldering away in the breasts of true Britons. I know that the habit of drinking wine is becoming increasingly popular in this country. Nevertheless, there is a feeling, harboured now as ever by many honest yeomen, that the correct English drinks are ale and cider, and that there is something affected, *risqué*, effeminate, or even immoral about those who deliberately pursue a preference for wine. This residual insularity, compounded as it is of

ignorance, puritanism and sheer heartiness, is as difficult to discredit as any other form of nationalist prejudice; and it is certainly no help to those who wish to discredit it to be saddled with the support of the professional wine-praiser, who, clad in his velvet jacket and surrounded by paraphernalia more suitable to a sorcerer, sips like a ninny, ruminates like a cow, and finally pronounces with the obscurity and self-satisfaction of the Delphic Sibyl.

What we need is more fact and less phrase-making. It is to the honour of Edward Hyams and Walter James that they have given us just that. Mr. Hyams (*Vin*) takes us quietly and without showing off through much of France, commenting in a sensible, practical and withal elegant fashion on the nature and quality not only of the wines but also of the places and the people. Neat but not gaudy: a useful book whether you are thinking of taking a holiday or stocking a cellar.

Mr. James, on the other hand, has simply written a dictionary of names and terms. The information he gives is accurate but never pedantic; his wit and astringency remind one, from time to time, of the greatest lexicographer of all; and he is generous with irrelevant but pleasing tit-bits. Thus *Abbotato*, we learn, may mean "... as a noun, a person ready to eat anything or open to take a bribe"—a diverting and idiomatic term of abuse. As further examples of his versatility Mr. James treats us to an ironic dissertation on missionaries and their hostility to drink, and reminds us that corkage may be demanded of a man who takes his wife to a brothel.

These are two books, then, which can do nothing but good in the struggle against anti-wine feeling in this country. The same cannot be said of Alec Waugh's *In Praise of Wine*. This opens, promisingly enough, as a history of drinking habits; but on page 57 Mr. Waugh announces that he is going to change his tactics. None of his books, he tells us with wry and condescending self-deprecation, ever turns out as originally planned, and now, after 56 pages, he has "come to realize that the history of wine is not so much the history of centuries and of countries as of the wines themselves"; so he proposes simply to tell us about the great wines he himself has enjoyed. This has the dual advantage, one might surmise, of saving Mr. Waugh the trouble of further research into historical custom and of leaving him plenty of room for personal anecdote. Even so, this book might not have been without value (he *has* drunk a lot of wine, after all) did it not subsequently appear to be sloppy in style, diffuse and scrappy in content, and intolerable in its social pretensions. Mr. Waugh quotes much from his brother Evelyn; but he is apparently unable to recall that a major character in *Brideshead Revisited* was named not Floyd but Flyte (p. 61). Again, having given an admirable and titillating account of a dinner to which he entertained some friends in 1958, he must needs remark that "Lord Huntingdon

THESE LOOKS SPEAK VOLUMES

A Panorama of Publishers



8. ANTHONY BLOND

THIRTY-TWO; educated at Eton and New College, where he was an Exhibitioner in History. Served for two years in the Royal Artillery after the war, and for six months in a factory in Manchester. Became a literary agent specializing in sensational and explosive books but not liking them much. Has published, since May '58, thirty odd titles of varying hue and is most proud of Simon Raven's *The Feathers of Death* and *The Establishment*, a polemic symposium from the left. Has been described as the fastest eater in publishing and as having "the features of an amateur boxer" but is in fact frightened of blows and a convinced pacifist. Has a Bentley.

said that he felt he got the flavour of the Montrachet more fully because it was no more than chilled." Why such a rapid piece of wine talk should be quoted at all must remain a mystery: why Mr. Waugh had not the charity to conceal its authorship—that is another matter.

— SIMON RAVEN

NEW NOVELS

Eva. Meyer Levin. *Muller*, 16/-
The Crab-Apple Tree. Richard Church.
Heinemann, 15/-

The Right People. Peter Forster. *Hutchinson*, 16/-

Love for a King. Andrew Graham.
Bles, 9/6

ANNE FRANK's diary has apparently been a healthy influence in helping to straighten out the kinked minds of young Germans; I wish that *Eva*, by Meyer Levin, could be made compulsory reading for all German sixth forms, for it contains the fullest and most vivid account I have yet read of what it was like to be in Auschwitz. Mr. Levin's first-person heroine is a young Polish Jewess who manages in 1942 to escape to Austria under an assumed name, to work as a servant. When the S.S. catch up with her she is sent to Auschwitz, where she just avoids the gas chambers. Mr. Levin's style seems to me pedestrian though expressive, and some readers may find his vein of sentimentality too much for them, but nevertheless I think this is an important novel because it does get inside the skin of one of Germany's millions of racial victims, and conveys some inkling of their nightmare degradation. The girl's panic at losing her true identity is given great force; she feels "a terrible need to be known as oneself," and as Katarina is horrified to discover how little she can recall of Eva's childhood. This loss is far more frightening than mere loneliness, and Mr. Levin is deeply understanding of it.

Publishers make some quaint claims in their blurbs, but Messrs. Heinemann are quite right in describing Richard Church's *The Crab-Apple Tree* as in the tradition of Hardy. It is a refreshingly old-fashioned novel, untouched by Freud, unlapped by the stream of consciousness and put together of well-seasoned materials as sturdily as an old taproom table. Mr. Church sees rural life without romantic blinkers. He knows the malice and gossip and boredom of the average village; how expertly he sets his country background, in this case Kent, for a story that moves inevitably as the seasons round two old brothers gnarled like oaks.

In Peter Forster's second novel, *The Right People*, he tries to do too much, setting out to give a cross-section of life in to-day's London for both ends of the middle class, with and without expense accounts. As we visit millionaires' parties, film-stars' publicity junkets, smart night-clubs and studios off the King's Road his book teems with more and more characters, some of whom are

very shadowy, though one is impressed by his observation of the little things that distinguish differing patterns of behaviour; but at its centre are two clever and sympathetic studies, one of the difficulties in the relationship of an only son for his widowed mother, with whom he lives, and the other of the whole history from beginning to end of his love affair with a spoilt little rich girl. At every stage the latter rings horribly true. If Mr. Forster can deny himself such panoramic dilution he might write a very interesting novel.

It is a long step from the vulgarity of his flasher characters to the quiet good manners of Andrew Graham's *Love for a King*, which is no more than a long short story about the death of a beloved old king of a Ruritanian country, and what it meant to his people and his family and to a young Englishman who happened to be visiting at the time. Mr. Graham's account, beautifully written, is both touching and amusing; he has such a keen appreciation of tradition that he understands how to be gently funny about it. Full marks to his publisher for a charming production, and to William McLaren for some lovely pen-and-ink sketches.

— ERIC KROWN

OTHER NEW BOOKS

Triumph in the West. Sir Arthur Bryant.
Collins, 30/-

Lord Alanbrooke's sharp criticisms of Churchill in the first volume which Sir Arthur Bryant wrote around his diaries earned him a good deal of thoughtless unpopularity; his even more barbed remarks about General, now President, Eisenhower in this second volume ("Ike knows nothing of strategy," for instance; and "No real director of thought, plans, energy and direction") will now spread that unpopularity across another continent. It is pointless to discuss now who was right and who wrong; Alanbrooke's diaries were meant to be private, and he would hardly make entries in them suggesting that any course he intended to pursue was a wrong one. The question is whether they should be published. "I feel it is time," Alanbrooke writes in one place, "that the country was educated as to how wars are run"; but if the country thinks that wars are run by disputatious and obstinate men with no confidence in each other it would surely be better for the whole process to be kept private. However, because we are all Nosey Parkers at heart, we can't help finding these inside stories gloriously interesting; and because it is so personal—Lord Alanbrooke's story is in some ways the most interesting of the lot.

— B. A. Y.

The Identity of Jack the Ripper. Donald McCormick. *Jarrolds*, 18/-

It is only the English who could make a mass sex-murderer part of popular



Roy Nixon

mythology, and it is appropriate that the very name of Jack the Ripper should come from the doubtfully authentic letters sent to the press at the time. Were there four Ripper murders, or six, or ten? Sex murderers were so common in the East End during the eighteenthies that it is hard to be sure. Mr. McCormick goes through the crimes in detail, considers the various solutions put forward, including theories that the Ripper was a mad doctor and an abortionist midwife, and finally plumps for a *feldscher*, a Russian junior surgeon, named Pedachenko, who was possibly a Czarist police agent. At various points in his case Mr. McCormick rests heavily on the unpublished reminiscences of a certain Doctor Dutton, but he has pieced together scraps of evidence from Russian exiles and others, which mention Pedachenko. It is too much to hope for a definitive solution, but this is probably the best guess yet at the Ripper's identity. It is also quite fascinating reading.

— J. S.

BLOOD COUNT

Stairway to Murder. Osmington Mills. *Bles*, 12/6. Assorted suspects snowed up at jolly "Coaches-Welcome" Pennine inn, most of whom had good reason to avoid Army road-block. Tough old Welshwoman recognizes ex-convict among them but is murdered during night. Efficient, old-fashioned who-was-where-when detection concealed by easy and entertaining narrative. Only complaints: motive a bit strained, and all suspects a bit too nice to have done it.

Miss Bones. Joan Fleming. *Crime Club Choice*, 10/6. Funny macabre goings-on centred on bogus art shop in Shepherd Market. Characters named Walpurgis, Goole, Feenix, etc. Sinister old fence disappears, and his innocent assistant behaves wetly enough to become chief suspect. Characters all a bit fat for the plot, and denouement visible for miles, but pleasure value high.

Uncle Paul. Celia Fremlin. *Gollancz*, 13/6. Three neurotic sisters at seaside resort fret themselves silly over possible return of eldest's husband, an ex-murderer betrayed by her to police and now due out of prison. Rather an all-in-the-mind plot, and suffers from galloping conclusion, but very funny about exhaustingly inefficient holiday-making, with sand in every bun. Most civilized.

Cat Among the Pigeons. Agatha Christie. *Crime Club Choice*, 12/6. Middle-Eastern revolution results in cache of royal jewels arriving, unknown, at very swish girls' school. Murder, almost at once, in sports pavilion. Poirot, called in by precocious school-girl, investigates more by guess than by honest-to-God detection. Coincidence, alas is rife; but it's a very easy read.

Death on a Back-bench. Francis Hobson. *Eyre and Spottiswoode*, 12/6. Minor M.P. discovers treason during trip to Germany, but is found, poisoned, on back-bench before he can disclose it. Political correspondent of big newspaper, suspected by both police and criminals, hares willy-nilly across England before bringing criminals to book. Reads like pre-war comedy-thriller film, but quite fun.

— PETER DICKINSON

CREDIT BALANCE

In Some Authority. Frank Milton. *Pall Mall Press*, 16/6. Layman's guide to English Magistracy. Short outline of history, account of powers and duties, specimen days in court. Clear, readable and, being by a

Metropolitan magistrate, authoritative. Curious details: e.g. witness who toured Brazil in a Yiddish version of *Oklahoma!*

AT THE PLAY

"And Suddenly It's Spring"
(DUKE OF YORK'S)

Aunt Edwina (FORTUNE)

THERE was only one thing missing from the afternoon opening, which Peter Saunders said he had arranged to give daily-paper critics time to think about their notices, and that was a play about which the least experienced of them could possibly think for more than thirty seconds. Otherwise it was very much like a first-night, except that the old familiar faces emerged from day dresses and lounge suits, and without the competition of the bars people came back more readily after the intervals. The crowd of celebrity-spotters on the pavements was almost as dense, and so long as the cameras popped in the foyer—and they popped a lot—the customers seemed as reluctant as they always do for the play to start.

"And Suddenly It's Spring" is a desperately slight comedy acted with a fading verve. A fashionable dressmaker who is inexplicably dowdy announces on her thirty-fifth birthday that she will now start living; she buys herself some gorgeous clothes and sets about being seduced. There are three men on the agenda. The first is a button salesman with a tremendous reputation as a Don

Juan, which at closer quarters dwindles into married respectability and a pathological terror of flirting. The second is an American officer with such a commando approach to love that he frightens the dressmaker out of her wits. And the third, also from the American navy, is a hick who likes girls without make-up and holds strict views about marriage. From these materials Jack Popplewell makes what is really a surprisingly moral little tale. Margaret Lockwood plays the heroine with unforced gaiety, and is aided and abetted by Yolande Donlan,

REP SELECTION

Bristol Old Vic, *The Silent Woman*, until November 28th.

Playhouse, Liverpool, *Swan Song*, until November 28th.

Northampton Rep., *The Rape of the Belt*, until November 14th.

Leatherhead Theatre, *Double Cross*, until November 14th.

whose crisp sophistication is well supplied with lines like "Look, you over-hormonized muffins!" Hiding coyly behind moustaches in the topiary bracket, Frank Lawton scores as the salesman, and as the backwoods American John Stone distinguishes himself as an original comedian.

If it could be handled with (a) tact and (b) resource, a change of sex seemed to me a promising subject for a comedy. In *Aunt Edwina* William Douglas Home meets the demands of (a) completely, but fails with (b). Not only do we recover quickly from the shock of a hard-riding, hard-swearing officer returning from a visit to America in a blue dress his devoted wife has thoughtfully bought for him, but so does his family; and Mr. Douglas Home has his work cut out to keep the joke alive at all. It gives Henry Kendall an opportunity for one of the female impersonations he does so well in revue, but a female impersonation, however admirable it may be, that stretches out over a whole evening loses its force. I thought the young people in this hunting household rather dull, with the exception of Hilary Tindall. There is mild fun in the colonel being squeezed on a sofa by an amorous American in his cups played amusingly by Launce Maraschal, but the background comedy is pretty thin, and Margaretta Scott and Cyril Raymond, its two main props, have to work very hard to keep it going.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The Importance of Being Earnest (Old Vic—21/10/59), lively production. *The Marriage - Go - Round* (Piccadilly—4/11/59), a charming light exercise for Kay Hammond and John Clements. *Rollo* (Strand—14/10/59), neat comedy from Paris.

— ERIC KEOWN



"And Suddenly It's Spring"

Joy Lucas—YOLANDE DONLAN

Sally Seymour—MARGARET LOCKWOOD

AT THE PICTURES

They Came to Cordura
Les Amants

NO, not *Solomon and Sheba*; haven't you read enough people being funny about that already? And did they make the slightest difference to your determination to see it or not to see it? I stayed for nearly an hour and a quarter (about halfway through), hoping for at least a few laughs, and then left.

Top of the others this time is *They Came to Cordura* (Director: Robert Rossen), which is nothing great but has many good qualities. Here once more the basis is the group formula: in the synopsis, the familiar point is summed up in a phrase—on an arduous cross-country journey of many miles, lasting days, involving six men and a woman, "the true characters of all are bared." The scene is the Mexican border in 1916, at the time of the rebellion led by Pancho Villa. The leader of the party is Thorn (Gary Cooper), a U.S. Army major responsible for getting back to base five other Army men who have been recommended for Medal of Honour bravery awards; he has been more or less contemptuously made "Awards Officer" after showing cowardice himself. The woman (Rita Hayworth) is being taken back as a prisoner, accused of treason.

Thorn is perpetually worrying away at the idea of courage and trying by questioning the others to get some definite notion of what it is, as if it were a quality existing somehow by itself, independently of the individuals who display it. Not surprisingly, he gets nowhere; they hardly understand his questions, and the answers of each reveal that their spectacular bravery seemed to them, at the moment, like nothing of the kind. The tough violent sergeant for instance (very well played by Van Heflin) vaguely remembers that he ran towards the Mexicans who were firing at him because "I thought I might kill me a couple" and when asked what he feels about getting the medal says well, he could use the extra two bucks a month.

And gradually it emerges that though the five men showed great bravery on a particular occasion, they are not by any

[*They Came to Cordura*

Major Thorn—GARY COOPER

Sergeant Chalk—VAN HEFLIN

Adelaide Geary—RITA HAYWORTH

means noble otherwise; the dangers and increasing hardships of the journey reveal them one by one as very much less worthy characters than Thorn himself. By force of will he manages to hold on to his leadership, enduring progressively worse things till he gets his mutinous party to Cordura, thus proving he has courage too. Essentially the film does no more than point out that there are different kinds of courage, and that the kind rewarded with medals may be shown by men otherwise contemptible. Its weakness is the character of Thorn: it seems odd that he, an experienced soldier, should not have realized this before. Its strength is in the pungency of some of the other characters, and its visual splendour (CinemaScope Eastman Colour—Burnett Guffey).

Les Amants (Director: Louis Malle) has had too much of the wrong kind of attention: publicized censorship trouble, and then all that absurd fuss about the poster... Inevitably this will overload its audience with people who can't appreciate it at all (this is another of those instances where, as I've said before, the "X" certificate attracts precisely those child-minds it was designed to keep away). The film has had a mixed press, ranging from (mainly moral) disapproval to lyrically high praise; I don't think it deserves either. Plainly the young director has great gifts, but to suggest that this is a great film seems to me quite wrong. For one thing there is far too much off-screen comment and narration. It really is not good enough to make an off-screen voice say "Jeanne was overcome with jealousy" as we watch Jeanne Moreau gazing into the

distance; she, or the dialogue, or some incident should show us jealousy. Even less welcome is the literary flavour of "It seemed as if he was waiting for her—and yet as if he did not recognize her" (when the lovers meet in the garden at night). This is not film-making, but reading aloud while we look at illustrations. On the other hand M. Malle also shows a fascination with narrative detail, relevant or not, which I take to be the result of a young man's sheer pleasure in using the film medium. It's an uneven, constantly interesting piece with brilliant patches, in some of which Jeanne Moreau shows herself an actress in no need at all of any disembodied commentator to describe her emotions.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

With *Les Amants* is *We Die Alone*, a Norwegian film of David Howarth's book about Jan Baalsrud's incredible war-time escape, lasting over two months, across 75 icy miles to Sweden; rough but very impressive. Also in London: *Anatomy of a Murder* (14/10/59), Bergman's *The Face* (7/10/59), Hitchcock's *North by Northwest* (28/10/59), Danny Kaye intermittently splendid in *The Five Pennies* (4/11/59), *Les Cousins* (7/10/59), and *I'm All Right, Jack* (26/8/59).

Only one of the releases was noticed here: *The Naked Maja* (9/9/59), which is about Goya and magnificent to look at but not otherwise. *Deadline Midnight* is one of those newspaper-office stories where everything happens on one night; quite a bit of amusing dialogue, but as a whole empty and contrived.

— RICHARD MALLETT

EXHIBITIONS

"Punch in the Cinema," Odeon, Cardiff, until November 16.

"Punch in the Theatre," Civic Theatre, Chesterfield, and Little Theatre, Middlesbrough.

"Punch with Wings," Exhibition Hall, Queen's Buildings, London Airport Central.

For South African readers:

"Punch in the Cinema," Association of Arts Gallery, Burg Street, Cape Town, Nov. 23, for two weeks.



PETER SCOTT

[Faraway Look

AT THE OPERA

Cinderella (SADLER'S WELLS)

AS *La Cenerentola*, this Rossini piece is very finely sung on summer nights at Glyndebourne before expense account and other sunnyside minorities, with interlude for lobster and champagne or other Rossinian delicacies. The people who make up a typical Sadler's Wells audience are economically of a humbler sort and don't give a fig for Glyndebourne. Let me assure them in any case that relatively they aren't missing much. In the comic and fairy-tale fields, Sadler's Wells has in my experience never done anything that is a patch on Arthur Jacobs' funny (though charmingly simple) translation of Ferretti's book and Douglas Craig's production, which serves the translator well.

The first few minutes, I must own, made me fearful. Patricia Kern got nowhere with *Cinderella*'s moping and beautiful opening tune—which, on reflection, rarely makes any dramatic mark, for all its beauty, whoever sings it. But *Cinderella*'s main reason for existence is her big display arias later on. With these Miss Kern did assuredly, even brilliantly, taking her runs, roulades and arpeggios with the tranquil proficiency of a tight-wire performer for Bertram Mills. The lobster and champagne handful in the dress circle stopped fingering their ties and began to beam with relief. Miss Kern had come as close to Glyndebourne standards as made no matter.

Not all the singers were as adept as she. Two of them, when they came to the trickier vocal floridities, made me sit on the edge of my seat apprehensively, then emit sighs of relief if not of satiated pleasure. But the great thing is that everybody on the stage—Prince, Dandini, Baron, Ugly Sisters, Alidoro, Footmen, Coachmen, Ball-guests, and the rest—

was droll, neat, uninhibited, as good to look at as Carl Toms' scenery and, ninety-nine bars out of a hundred, pleasant to hear.

In patter ensembles singers and orchestra (now much more audible in its new stokehold) were twice transiently out of gear, a first night infelicity for which neither Bryan Balkwill (conductor) nor anybody else is going to be birched by me.

—CHARLES REID

ON THE AIR

Ducks and Jurymen

THERE'S no getting away from it, Peter Scott puts over the old birds and beasts routine in a very cosy fashion indeed. His "Faraway Look" series (BBC) has a tendency to lull the viewer into a pleasant, drowsy state which I for one find most acceptable on a rainy Friday night. Here are all these assorted winged, furry, webbed, scaly, spiny, finny creatures splashing and grunting and squirming and swooping and hatching and cooing and killing and going through all the heart-breaking experiences of the wild; and here I sit in smug comfort, safe in the knowledge that whatever dread calamity might befall me, no prowling carnivore is likely to chase me down a hole, no predatory eagle carry me off, no praying mantis reach out and snap me up, no cunning lizard chew a lump out of any of my eggs. As Mr. Scott's soothing commentary goes on—now tentative, now chuckly, now apologetically informative, now a shade coy, now calm and monosyllabic, now pleasantly prosy like a school text-book—I find myself regarding the whole fascinating panorama as a never-ending flicker and flurry of hopelessly anonymous creatures great and small. How can I possibly remember the difference

between a gannet and a shearwater, an iguana and a bottle-nosed limpet, a pale-faced booby and a clink? How do I know I even got the names right? I have tried, I swear—but here is Mr. Scott whirling them all across my screen in bewildering succession, and they are all very beautiful, and frequently incredible, and I wouldn't be without any of them, from the Galapagos sea lions (who *don't* really resemble Mr. Scott in the water in the slightest) to the flamingos, the bush-babies and the great-crested whooping crane-flies, or whatever the devil the things were.

The photography in these films, by Mr. Scott and Tony Soper, seems to me to be of the highest standard. How effortless it all seems!—no sign anywhere of the back-breaking strain of waiting, waiting, hoping, manoeuvring: no hint of the hours spent in muddy discomfort only to find in the end that the confounded duck left the area a fortnight ago and in consequence is now rarer than ever. And mercifully not much of that nonsense about "This is me photographing her while she photographs me photographing her photographing this terribly dangerous gorilla, and this is the assistant director risking his life to photograph all three of us." As for Mr. Scott's skill with the crayon as he creates his lightning sketches ("Now his ridiculous little tail . . . the beady eye . . . the dark stripe between the fetlocks . . . and there he is"), this is something marvelous to watch.

"Juke Box Jury" (BBC) is not my cup of tea, but even if it were I would still like to make this suggestion. Surely the proceedings would be more lively and unpredictable if the members of the panel were not told who was playing or singing on the record under discussion until they had all reached their decisions as to whether it was likely to be a hit? As things are at present, these sessions strike me as being very flat, despite the determined efforts (often successful) of empanelled big-name comics to *ad lib* wisecracks. The producer, Russell Turner, has to work hard to introduce vitality by intermingling various close-up shots—of rapt or gaping tots in the audience, of the panel members doodling or concentrating or just plain smiling, of chairman David Jacobs waiting all agog, or of the face of the recording star in question in a front-of-house-style still photograph. However, it is evidently an essential part of Western civilization nowadays that as many pop discs should be played on TV and radio as is humanly possible, preferably just before they are released; and since presumably neither the record companies nor their paying customers have any complaints about this I don't suppose I should start shoving my oar in. Just the same, to mangle a timeless phrase, I say it's plugging and I say the hell with it.

—HENRY TURTON

As They Might Have Been

III MARILYN MONROE

*MEDEA, or Camille—in such a part
You glimpse Monroe's superb dramatic art,
When simply-falling drapery divulges
No inkling of her celebrated bulges.*



By Courtesy of the Management

DURING the first three months I lived in Rome I had a quick succession of landladies all of whom had either a sleep-walking son, an over-developed mother instinct, or an unshakable conviction that I was Cræsus travelling incognito. Then my friend Assunta's mother decided to absorb me into her family and I yanked my cases across the Tiber for what I hoped would be the very last time.

Our modest flat was the envy of many, for though it was identical in structure with every other flat in the palazzo, what the others didn't have were eighteen free seats throughout the summer for whatever was showing at the cinema next door. We wouldn't have had them either if the cinema manager had been able to do anything about it. Powerless and enraged, he would gaze up at the happy expectant faces crowding our windows and long for the first brisk tang of autumn when he could snap shut his sliding roof and force us to pay like everyone else.

The cinema was directly below one end of the palazzo, but only we got a spot-on view of the screen, though quite a few families had a glimpse of some sort, and it cannot be denied that to see a picture from the knees down gave a certain fillip to the most hackneyed of plots. We had little time for afternoon performances because the light was too strong, but the late night shows never failed to draw a full house.

Monday evenings were reserved for the family and a few intimate friends. We took our places before the dining-room window, the tallest well to the fore on cushions, the shortest at the back on smart cocktail stools made especially for the purpose by a friend of Assunta's father in return for two regular seats on a Tuesday and a matinée whenever requested. With tact and goodwill we could seat twelve at this window; but the window in the hall was a different matter, for Nonna took her seat in the centre and she was known for neither

By CATHERINE DRINKWATER

tact nor goodwill. She doted on Westerns, and once during a surprise come-back of *The Virginian* sat through every performance, refusing to share the window with anyone no matter how humbly requested. Not that we cared for ourselves, as she used to drown the sound track by eating plums and sucking the last vestige of fruit from the stones. She would then hold them up for inspection, and throw them at anyone who failed to take her fancy.

The cinema had not made its impact on Nonna until late in life. For years she had scorned it; then when she was rising seventy they had built the one next door and introduced her to Billy the Kid and the James Boys. It was love at first sight. By the time she'd reached eighty she could have driven a herd from Dodge to El Paso single-handed and riding a bike; and there was less

chance of her losing her way on the Rio Grande than in Via Colonna (actually she knew surprisingly little about Rome, and *Three Coins in the Fountain* had come as something of an eye-opener). She not only watched cowboy pictures, she read cowboy books. As a student I was allowed extra library tickets, and she had me tortured. Three and four times a week I was groping through the shelves looking for something with plenty of blood and bluster that she hadn't already read.

The summer cantered by too quickly, and inevitably there came that first brisk tang that heralded not only the decisive snap of the sliding roof but the return of our own private Ice Age—the four months in the year when we nearly froze to death in sunny Italy, and when Nonna (the only sensible one amongst us) plastered her body in camphorated oil, put on all the clothes she possessed and went into hibernation. Friends and relations ran about their semi-tropical flats in their underwear, while down below a solicitous *portière* shovelled on the coal and sent the temperature up another couple of degrees. Our *portière*, unhampered by the intricacies of central heating, spent the winter days at his cousin's playing pontoon while we shuffled about our vast unheated rooms in fur boots and overcoats.

One bitter December it snowed. The family, incredulous and fearful, were convinced we were slowly inching towards the Arctic Circle and that it was only a matter of time before Gianicolo became a ski run. Cases were packed, carpets rolled, and Nonna, protesting violently, was bundled into the furniture van while we trekked across the Tiber in her wake to an ultra-modern dream flat. It had central heating, a lift, an aquarium in the entrance hall, and a small concrete balcony to each flat where Nonna, strangely subdued, would sit of a summer's evening, peering through the neat iron railings and aimlessly throwing an occasional plum-stone at the world.



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